PRACTICAL MAGIC

by

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. COMMONS (SCROD, MASSACHUSETTS) - DAWN (AUTUMN 1690) 1

In the depressing mists of a November morning, a handful of black-garbed Puritans have gathered to hang a witch. Stark wooden hovels encroach upon a grim pasture near the sea. A milk cow looks on mildly, chewing.

A whispery, warm old voice begins:

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
For more than two hundred years the Owens women have been blamed for everything that has gone wrong in this town.

On the gallows stands a tragic beauty, Maria Owens (18), a coarse noose around her neck. She shivers in her thin white shift. She looks down at a cradle: a newborn baby lies swaddled there.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
If damp spring arrived, if cows in the pasture gave milk that was runny with blood...

Watch as the coarse noose is pulled now, taut, around the young woman's neck. A pock-faced Puritan reverent begins reading aloud from a prayer book.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
If a colt died with colic or a baby was born with a red birthmark stamped onto his cheek...

Maria stares ahead, concentrating. As the reverend signals, Maria closes her eyes, her lips moving, almost a prayer. The grim-faced executioner pushes her off the gallows platform.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Everyone believed that fate must have been twisted, at least a little, by the forces of magic.

CLOSE - ROPE

The twisted hemp breaks above Maria's head, the hanging rope falling useless against her body. Townsfolk race away.

2 EXT. DOCK (MASSACHUSETTS) - DAY 2

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Some believe Maria Owens was a witch.

Dark. Stormy. The reverend angrily pushes Maria, still clutching her infant daughter, into a row boat. He shoves the tiny craft into the sea while Maria clutches her daughter, the rope still hanging around her neck like a weave of torn sorrows.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Others claim that Maria was unlucky in love.

3 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - BEACH - AFTERNOON 3

RAIN. WIND HOWLS. The rowboat sits aged and abandoned on the rocky shore. Under a black sky, Maria walks the desolate beach, holding her infant daughter.

Her footprints are erased by a churning wave --

4 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - BEACH - DAWN 4

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Both were true.

And are replaced by new footprints as Maria strides the beach, another baby in her arms.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Men found themselves mysteriously drawn to Maria's island. Sailors lost their ships to the rocky shore, brought home tales of seduction.

Her tangle-haired daughter dances after Maria, across smashed rigging and broken cargo. The child lifts a bolt of scarlet China silk, letting the material unfurl over her head, carried on the wind. A wrecked clipper ship rests on jagged boulders in the distance.

Maria steps over the blue hand of a drowned seaman, kneels over a still breathing sailor.

CLOSE ON SAILOR'S HANDSOME FACE

As she touches his cheek. His eyes open. Blue, blue like the sea.

5 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - NIGHT 5

A crude cottage of stone and wrecked debris sits away from the beach, along the forest line.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Whether her sailor fell under Maria's spell or Maria came under his was their only dispute. What they had together was the purest form of magic.

PAN ACROSS the sleeping faces of two small girls. CAMERA FINDS Maria and the sailor making love in the glow cast by the raging flames of the bonfire.

6 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - BEACH - MORNING 6

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Perhaps he left for fear that the fire of their passion would consume him. Or perhaps the embers of their love grew cold. Maria never knew.

CLOSE ON MARIA'S BARE FEET

As she runs down the jetty, blood spilling from her soles onto the jagged rocks. PULL UP to find Maria, now six months pregnant, on the rocky point, her sailor rowing a tiny boat away towards a schooner on the horizon.

7 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - MARIA OWENS COTTAGE - MONTHS LATER 7

Maria sits nursing her newborn, staring out to sea, her tears falling like rain on her infant's cheeks.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
All she knew was that she was alone. And her baby nearly drowned in Maria's bitter tears.

KYLIE (V.O.)
Is that where the curse started?

8 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON (PRESENT) 8

Huge. Sunlight. Two little girls, ANTONIA (8) and KYLIE (10), stand at the kitchen table, whittling wooden sticks into spears with kitchen knives.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: 8

AUNT JET (O.S.)
Curse, dear?

FAVOR a woman as she emerges from the pantry, carrying a tray covering mysterious shapes beneath wax paper. Apparently a beautiful 50ish, but actually decades older. This is AUNT JET, placid, sweet, manipulative.

ANTONIA
Kylie said all the Owens women are cursed never to find true love.

Jet crosses to the stove where AUNT FRANCES, same complex beauty, stands stirring a steaming black Calphalon cauldron.

AUNT FRANCES
Hogwash. I've found true love a million times.

AUNT JET
It just seem to always end in disaster.

Jet whips the rice paper off the tray to reveal... apples. The girls begin planting the sharp hilts in the ripe fruit.

AUNT FRANCES
Lord knows they're still flogging us over the Wilkins boys.

9 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - COMMONS - DAY (1920S) 9

Jet and Frances as beautiful young women race through a storm across an open field, throwing kisses, taunting a pair of young men to catch them. Out of nowhere the boys are struck by lightning.

ANTONIA (V.O.)
Is that how come you never got married?

10 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (PRESENT) 10

AUNT FRANCE
Oh, I adore married men. Just as long as they're not married to me.

AUNT JET
Your grandmother Regina found great joy in marriage.

11 EXT. MASSACHUSETTS LAKE - SEAPLANE DOCK - SUNSET 11

A young couple, elegant hippies -- beautiful, reckless -- wave goodbye from the open doorway of a seaplane. Two small girls, SALLY (11), sweet, dark, serious, and GILLIAN (10), flaming red hair, wild eyes, wave back.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
But on their tenth anniversary your grandparents made a tragic mistake. They believed their love had wings...

The plane pulls out onto the sun-stained water. Gillian and Sally walk off down the pier with their governess.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Perhaps their love brought them too close to the sun. Or maybe it was just a bad fuel pump in the Piper-Cub's engine.

FAVOR Sally as she walks the dock. A sudden, loud rhythmic SCRITCHING. Sally stops, turns as if she hears a sound the others cannot hear, watches the plane teeter off into the sunset. HOLD ON Sally's small face.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Whatever the reason, they never came home.

12 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - COTTAGE - DAY 12

The cottage Maria's sailor built sits alone along the forest line. REVERSE DISSOLVE as a giant Victorian house and tailored grounds appear in the b.g. Two small Madeleine-like figures resolve, bags in hand. Aunt Jet and Aunt Frances emerge from the main house, opening the main gate, welcoming the girls inside.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
After your grandparents died, we just tucked your mother and Aunt Gillian right up into our lives and reared them as best we knew how.

13 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 13

A full moon shines in the window. Chaos. The furniture has been shoved aside. With an exuberant bellow, Gillian swings on a satin-corded trapeze, swashbuckling a sword at the chandelier.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 13

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
It was wonderful to have children in the house. We had chocolate cake for breakfast and never bothered about stupid things like bedtimes and report cards...

Aunt Frances is poised, Martha Graham-like, at the top of the staircase. Sally, wearing her mother's wedding veil, braids Jet's long grey hair which cascades in a rippling silver train fifteen feet long.

14 INT. OWENS HOUSE - GREENHOUSE - AFTERNOON 14

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Of course, as in any close family, there were rituals and customs to be passed along to the next generation.

Gillian and Sally sit opposite Jet and Frances across a round wooden table. Before the two girls sit unlit candles. A giant leather-bound spell book is open before them, its pages covered with ornate Latin text and runes.

AUNT FRANCES
Sally, being a year older than Gillian, caught on more quickly of course...

Gillian blows on her unlit candle. The wick just sparks. Sally blows on hers. The wick bursts magically into flames.

15 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - SCHOOL - DAY 15

Autumn leaves swirl in dervishes down the cobbled streets. Sally and Gillian walk home from school. SHOUTS, WHISTLES.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
But unlike Gillian, Sally could never fully accept that we are different.

SALLY
Just ignore them.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 15

WIDER ANGLE

A group of BOYS across the school fence are following the girls. Following Gillian. Gillian has a burgeoning magic all her own and by her walk, the way she throws her hair, she's starting to know it.

SALLY
Gilly, come on.

But Gillian has stopped, turns to face the boys who pause now, not sure what to make of her direct gaze.

GILLIAN
Boo. Aren't you scared I'm gonna cast a spell on you?

A few of the boys actually step back. But the leader, a bit older, holds his ground.

BOY
I think you already did. A love spell.

The other boys whelp and cheer their comrade. Gillian moves close to the fence, her face barely a breath away from the Boy's.

GILLIAN
Prove it.

The other kids go wild, egging him on. The Boy looks like he's about to kiss her. Suddenly a rock hits Gilly in the leg. Hard. She goes down on one knee.

GIRLS (O.S.)
Witch, witch, you're a bitch.

REVERSE ANGLE

A gang of girls have gathered in front of Gillian and Sally. A freckle-faced girl (SARA) picks up another stone.

SARA
Where's your broom? Where're your black cats? Bet you killed them just like you killed your parents.

SALLY
Leave us alone.

Sara hauls off and wings her rock.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (2) 15

CLOSE - SALLY

looks up just in time to see the projectile heading straight towards Gilly's head. She moves fast, flicking her hand in a reflexive warding gesture.

BACK TO SCENE

The rock changes course in mid-air, SHATTERING a car WINDOW.

Sally spins and faces Sara, pissed, the freckle-faced girl paralyzed now with fear.

SALLY
You're the bitch.
(malevolent)
Boo.

That's it. The girls scream, race off. Sally kneels now, putting her arms around the weeping Gillian.

GILLIAN
I hate it here. I miss Mom and Dad.

16 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC/GIRLS' BEDROOM - NIGHT 16

Malibu Barbie and Ken. An Easy-Bake-Oven hand painted with day-glow stars. Stacked issues of Tiger Beat. A typical pre-adolescent girls' room. Almost.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Perhaps we should have been more careful. There is no worse combination than a house full of magic and two tiny broken hearts.

Gillian and Sally sit on the floor, the giant spell book open before them. A pentacle has been drawn in colored chalk on the old wooden boards. Within the center: a man's bow tie. A wedding veil. A tattered photo of their parents. A simple wooden propeller plane.

SALLY
Mommy. Daddy. Can you hear me? It's Sally --

GILLIAN
And Gillian.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

SALLY
We want you to come back. Please.

AUNT FRANCES (O.S.)
No, children...

WIDER ANGLE

The aunts stand in the doorway.

AUNT FRANCES
Magic can do many things. Turn laughter to gold. Melt an early frost. Hear secrets in a robin's song. But magic can never defeat death. I'm sorry.

Sally stares up at her Aunt a long beat, tears in her eyes.

17 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 17

A SCRATCHING. The screen door is shut tight. We see a woman's form, ravaged by sorrow, head bowed in shame.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Townsfolk tended to shun us like a biblical plague.

Sally ENTERS FRAME, watches the pathetic creature, mesmerized. She reaches for the doorknob when a hand grabs her shoulder.

WIDER ANGLE

Jet spins Sally and shoos her up towards her room.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
Until the dark of night. Until the suffering pushed them past their prejudices. Until they needed us. You see, desire has a way of making a person oddly courageous.

18 INT. OWENS HOUSE - FOYER - MOVING - NIGHT 18

Sally grabs Gillian and races up the main staircase, then back down the secret, winding rear stairs. The two girls huddle in the dark beneath a portrait of Maria Owens, hidden in shadow, watching...

19 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 19

A LOVELORN YOUNG WOMAN, pale, fragile, sits in mid-conversation with Aunt Jet.

LOVELORN
He has to leave his wife. He has to.

Aunt Frances ENTERS from the greenhouse, holding a fluttering dove.

AUNT JET
Perhaps you might find another one better suited.

LOVELORN
I don't want anyone else. He's all I can think about. Why the hell else would I come here?

AUNT FRANCES
Take the money, Jet.

Jet shrugs, then nods to the woman who takes out a roll of bills and hands them across the table.

Frances cups the dove in her bony hands, exposing its downy breast. The BIRD COOS desperately, throat heaving. Jet hands Lovelorn a hat pin. She lifts the pin over the quivering dove.

CLOSE - TWO GIRLS

Gillian is riveted. Sally turns her head, looking away. A SINGLE COO, cut short.

BACK TO SCENE

LOVELORN
I want him to want me so much he can't stand it.

Aunt Jet matter-of-factly wraps the dead bird in a dishtowel.

AUNT JET
Be careful what you wish for.

The two girls. Watch on.

SALLY
I hope I never fall in love.

GILLIAN
I can't wait to fall in love.

20 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT 20

Moonlight streams in through the open window. Gillian and Sally sit together in bed. Sally lays something on the night table: the picture of their parents.

SALLY
Gilly, what if you die before me?

GILLIAN
No way. We're gonna get old and live together like the aunts. We're gonna die on the same day.

SALLY
Promise?

GILLIAN
Swear.

Both girls spit into their palms, then rub them together. Sally smiles, satisfied, shuts out the light.

21 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 21

Sally weeds the Aunts' garden as Gillian sits in a tree, hanging silver kitchen spoons from the branches.

GILLIAN
Heads up. Weirdo at 12 o'clock.

Coming down the street is Lovelorn, dress flapping open, one heel broken. She is being chased by her fisherman lover.

LOVELORN
Get off me. You make me sick.

But Lovelorn's lover isn't taking no for an answer. He covers her desperately with kisses, falls to his knees, trying to kiss her legs. The woman kicks him off, stumbles through the gate into the garden. She grabs Sally roughly and shakes her.

LOVELORN
Where are they? Where are those twisted hags?

22 INT. OWENS HOUSE - GREENHOUSE - DAY 22

Jet stands with Frances, a stunted flower in her hand, its petals sick and ravaged by blight.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: 22

AUNT JET
Oh, dear.

OUT the GLASS, Lovelorn's fisherman has righted himself, comes up behind her, pressing himself against her, moving with passion.

FRANCES
It's your turn.

AUNT JET
No. No, I handled the school teacher. It's definitely your turn.

23 EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION 23

LOVELORN
Help me, damn you. Help me.

SALLY
Be careful what you wish for.

Her hand moves so fast it's a blur, slapping Sally across the mouth, sending her hard into the ground.

24 INT. GREENHOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION 24

Jet's hand moves as if pulling the strings of an invisible cat's cradle. The glass of the greenhouse distorts, veining momentarily as the spell passes through and then gone.

25 EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION 25

Lovelorn steps back as if struck. She shakes her head. Disoriented. Then begins to speak. Or tries to. Instead of words her mouth emits only a single sound. The coo of a brokenhearted dove.

A beat. Then the woman turns, heads off, followed by her overly attentive lover, still kissing her passionately, her cries of protest only sad birds sounds.

26 INT. GREENHOUSE - DAY 26

The spell book sits open on the greenhouse table.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 26

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
If love is the source of all joy, then it is also the womb of our greatest sorrows. Sally understood that better than any girl her age should.

Sally walks amidst the plants, a glass bowl tucked under one arm.

SALLY
He can flip pancakes in the air.

As Sally speaks, she runs her fingers up the bloom of a red rose, taking the bright petals and depositing them in the bowl.

SALLY
He can ride a pony backwards.

This time the petals she chooses are a deep crimson.

SALLY
(lavender petals)
He will hear my call a mile away.
(orange blossoms)
He will whistle my favorite song.
(snapdragons)
He will have one green eye and one blue.

Sally glances out the window. A shooting star streaks across the horizon. Sally watches the light, deposits a handful of tulips.

SALLY
His favorite shape is a star.
(looks down at bowl)
Only he will be my one true love.

27 EXT. ROOF 27

Sally and Gilly climb onto the pitched roof, Sally holding the giant spell book, Gillian clutching the bowl of petals.

GILLIAN
I thought you never wanted to fall in love.

SALLY
That's the point, genius. The guy I dreamed up doesn't exist.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

Sally begins reading aloud the book Gillian has opened. HOLD ON the flower bowl. Suddenly, all the petals run, their colors bleeding into each other until each petal is a tiny rainbow. Sally reaches in, clutching the multicolored petals. She stands now on the peak of the roof, WIND picking up, her arms extended, hands balled into fists.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
When the spell was complete, Sally felt certain she'd never suffer the misfortune of a broken heart.

As the WIND CRESCENDOS, Sally opens her fists, the multi-colored petals whipping up into the air, taking flight up with them now, into the sky and gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

28 EXT. NIGHT SKY 28

PAN DOWN. Lights burn in the Owens house. PUSH IN TOWARDS the attic.

29 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT 29

The toys are gone. A grown-up Sally (19), still serious, still beautiful, carries a travel bag to Gillian (18), who sits on the window sill, her beauty ever more lethal.

GILLIAN
(off travel bag)
Throw it to him.

Below, a burly youth stands at the bottom of a ladder, arms open.

SALLY
This thing weighs fifty pounds.

GILLIAN
Trust me.

Sally looks at Gillian. Shrugs, tosses the bag which lands squarely in the lad's arms. He grunts, barely phased, heads to the car.

SALLY
Wow.

GILLIAN
You have no idea.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

The girls exchange a smile.

GILLIAN
Come with us.

SALLY
I'm sure Hercules would love that. Gilly, do you really love him? Enough to get married?

GILLIAN
What's enough? I need to get out of here.

Gillian leans up and kisses Sally. Starts to swing onto the ladder.

SALLY
Don't go. Not yet.

GILLIAN
I'll always be with you, Sal.

SALLY
(lifts her palm)
Swear.

GILLIAN
I'm not going to spit on my hand.

Gillian smiles. Look down at the youth.

GILLIAN
Honey, throw me your Swiss Army.

He throws up the small pocket knife. Catching it, she opens the blade and makes a small cut on her palm. Does the same to Sally.

GILLIAN
My blood. Your blood. Forever.

Gillian presses her bloody palm against Sally's for a moment, their fingers intertwined as they clasp hands.

Sally tries to speak. But can't. And then Gillian is down the ladder, into the arms of her strongman, laughing and then gone.

SALLY
Goodbye, Gilly-Bean.

HOLD ON Sally as she watches them go.

30 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - MAIN STREET - DAY 30

A postcard come to life. Jet, Frances and Sally exit the picturesque post office. Townsfolk stare, give them a wide berth, Jet sorting through the mail as they walk.

AUNT JET
Light, water, heat bills. When did everything that used to be free start costing money?
(lifts a postcard)
Look, from Gillian. Dear Sally...

SALLY
It's for me, Aunt Jet.

AUNT JET
Of course it is, dear. She doesn't want you to 'freak out.' But apparently she's gotten engaged again. What's that, number four?

AUNT FRANCES
Poor Gillian, can't get her oil changed without hitching her saddle to some man. It says here --

Sally grabs the card. Both women look at her scornfully.

AUNT JET
Someone's having a bad morning.

AUNT FRANCES
Must be high tide.

SALLY
At least she's out in the world. At least Gillian's having a normal life.

A young couple passes, pushing a baby in a stroller. Sally stares longingly. Frances and Jet notice her expression.

AUNT JET
(off couple)
He's seeing his assistant. She's seeing John Brown's sister.

AUNT FRANCES
My dear, being normal is not a virtue. It's a lack of courage.

31 EXT. OUTDOOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY 31

Brightly-colored crates of produce. Frances is slapping a bunch of bananas against the edge of the stand while scolding the handsome grocer, MICHAEL.

AUNT FRANCES
This fruit is all fresh. Don't you have anything with a nice ripe mold?

AUNT JET
And fuzzy. Also, avocados. No bigger than a monkey's brain this time. And about as soft as the flesh of --

Sally moves in front of her aunts.

SALLY
Okay, Aunt Jet, he gets the idea.
(to Michael)
I'm sorry. They're just kidding around.

AUNT FRANCES
We certainly are not.

MICHAEL
That's alright. I have some moldy produce in the truck that I keep for my special customers.
(to Sally)
Care to give me a hand?

Sally, surprised but charmed, follows him.

AUNT JET
Well, he looks normal enough.

AUNT FRANCES
Weak chin. No imagination.

Sally and Michael laugh, disappearing behind the produce truck.

AUNT JET
They laugh well together. Frances, the child wants to be happy.

AUNT FRANCES
She'll outgrow it.

But Jet's gaze is impassive.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

AUNT FRANCES
Very well. I'll need a lock of his hair.

Jet pulls out a small pair of scissors and smiles.

32 EXT. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SUBURB - DAY 32

Rows of tract houses. Cookie-cutter life. Gillian, driving a convertible, backs out of one driveway, pulls up to the house next door. A man races out, hops in beside her.

Another MAN runs from the house Gillian just left. He is wearing only his underwear.

UNDERWEAR MAN
Gillian. Please, baby, come back. Gillian.

But she just screeches off with her new lover, hair trailing in the wind.

33 INT. OWENS HOUSE - MOVING SHOT - DAY 33

The BELL RINGS insistently. Sally marches down the hallway, pausing at the open greenhouse door to glare at the two Aunts, who are playing backgammon, pretending not to hear the bell.

SALLY
Hello. Have we all gone deaf?

34 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION 34

The BELL is now a PERSISTENT CHIME. Sally marches in, wrenches open the door to find... Michael. Eyes wide. Smitten.

MICHAEL
I... I... I'm sorry. I meant to call first.

And with that he takes her in his arms and kisses her. And kisses her. Sally resists at first, but then surrenders, kissing him back with all her heart.

CAMERA SPINS AROUND the kissing couple, COMING now TO REST BEHIND Sally's head as the lovers finally part. The two step out the door into...

35 EXT. SALLY AND MICHAEL'S HOUSE - DAY (TEN YEARS LATER) 35

The young couple emerge from their small white colonial home. Sally's hair is shorter, sassy. Michael has a beard. Their two children, Kylie (five) and Antonia (four) play on the lawn before them.

36 INT. SALLY AND MICHAEL'S HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT 36

Michael, Sally, Kylie and Antonia are immersed in a bubble bath in the big, clawfoot tub. All wear herbal masks. Sally is putting the final touches on Antonia's mask.

ANTONIA
Don't get it on my mouth --

SALLY
We've got to try it ourselves if I'm ever going to sell this stuff.

MICHAEL
(to Sally)
They're going to love it, hon.
(licks his lips)
Doesn't taste bad, either.

To a of "Oh, Daddy," they all burst into laughter and splash each other.

37 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 37

A fire burns within the hearth. Michael sits in a giant chair, both girls cuddled under an afghan with him as he reads a story. Sally brings mugs of cocoa. The very picture of familial contentment.

A sudden TICKING sound. Sally looks up, she's heard that sound before. Somewhere.

SALLY
What is that sound?

MICHAEL
(looking up)
What sound, sweetheart?

Sally stares at her husband, who smiles, goes back to his reading. The TICKING is getting LOUDER. Sally follows the noise to a small beetle as it moves around Michael's chair, then disappears beneath the floor boards.

CLOSE ON SALLY

Concerned.

38 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 38

Sally bursts in to find Jet and Frances waiting. Frances hands her a cup of tea as if they expected her.

SALLY
There was this ticking. I heard it once before. On the dock. Before Mom and Dad died.

AUNT JET
We know, dear.

AUNT FRANCES
Deathwatch beetle. An omen. I'm afraid he's doomed.

SALLY
What are you saying?

AUNT FRANCES
Michael. He's fated to die. Sugar in your tea?

SALLY
He can't die. You've got to do something. Cast a spell. Make a potion. You've got to help me.

AUNT JET
I'm sorry. We've been over this before. Magic can do many things. But it can't defeat death.

39 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - TWILIGHT 39

Michael's chair has been brought outside. Sally sprinkles a circle of soap powder around him, chants from the spell book. Michael smiles, humoring her, as if she were merely vacuuming.

40 EXT. TUCSON LOW-RENT NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT 40

A cement back yard with '50s pool. Party in progress. A dozen various losers -- military types, cowboys, bikers -- mill about drinking and getting stoned. Gillian lounges on a desk chair, smoking, bored, totally ignoring the burly guy next to her.

O.S. a WOMAN SCREAMS. She's been stung on her bare calf by a scorpion. TIGHT ON the scorpion squirming on the ground, suddenly crushed by a cowboy boot.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

PAN UP tight jeans, bandanna wrapped around one thigh TO... JAMES HAWKINS. A face beautiful or sinister, depending on the light, on his mood.

Gillian and Jimmy's eyes lock across the pool. The TICK of the DEATHWATCH BEETLE GROWS ever LOUDER.

41 INT. SALLY AND MICHAEL'S HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - MIDNIGHT 41

Kylie and Antonia nestle against Michael in the family bed, all asleep. Sally stands like an angel, drawing from her heart chakra to make a protective bubble over them. The SCRIIIIITCH-TICK-TICK GROWS LOUDER.

42 INT. TUCSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 42

Gillian is reading the palm of a tattooed biker chick.

GILLIAN
You definitely want to avoid Route 50.

Jimmy comes up behind her with his bandanna, which he silently ties around his eyes, leads her away down the hall. The door closes after them.

REVERSE ANGLE

Gillian's boyfriend watches on.

43 EXT. MAIN STREET - OUTDOOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY 43

It's RAINING. Michael, wearing a yellow rain slicker, loads a box of fruit from his truck into his hand cart. People greet him as they pass.

44 INT. SALLY AND MICHAEL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 44

Sally stands alone in the living room. A portrait of defeat. The TICKING has become DEAFENING. She falls to her knees, working feverishly now, trying to pry up floorboards with her bare hands.

45 EXT. ARIZONA DESERT - DAY 45

Gillian's boyfriend and two beefy pals walks TOWARDS CAMERA.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: 45

A double-wide silver Airstream trailer in the b.g. PUSH IN on Gillian sitting, holding a beaten-up Jimmy on the ground before the open trailer door. His head resting in her arms, as if she's nursing a sick animal.

She strokes his hair, kissing his cuts, her attention drawn to...

CLOSE ON JIMMY'S RING

Silver, in the shape of a rattlesnake. The DEATHWATCH BEETLE CONTINUES.

46 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - MAIN STREET - DAY 46

As Michael wheels his cart across the street, a flood of bicycle racers come around the corner, speedy and lean in bright Spandex and goggles, their colorful flags flying.

Michael spins, concerned, as the cyclists bear down on him, the CLICKING of their WHEELS and GEARS becoming confused with the TICK-TICK-SCRIIITCH of the DEATHWATCH BEETLE.

47 INT. SALLY AND MICHAEL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 47

Sally pries at the boards even more frantically, kneeling on the sub-floor.

48 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - MAIN STREET - DAY 48

The flood of bicycles parts, flowing around Michael who stands among them unharmed, grinning. Michael waves them good-bye, and turns...

MICHAEL'S POV

Out of nowhere, a truck barrels down on him.

49 INT. OWENS KITCHEN - DAY 49

Amid the pile of floorboards, a sudden silence. The BEETLE has STOPPED TICKING. Sally knows. She closes her eyes hard.

50 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - MAIN STREET - DAY 50

A SCREECH of BRAKES, COLLISION. Fruit rolls across the street like a mad solar system of planets spinning wildly out of control.

51 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - DAY 51

Two small Madeleine-like figures stand at the front gate, bags in hand. PULLS BACK to reveal...

Sally stands behind her two girls as the Aunts emerge, open the gate. This sad and tiny family head towards the house.

52 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY 52

Sunny. Clear. As if the weather were trying to defy the somber proceedings. From an old silver urn, Sally stands with the Aunts, spilling Michael's powdery ashes under the opulent peonies.

SALLY
All your spells and hocus-pocus. For what? It's totally useless.

AUNT FRANCES
I wouldn't be so quick-tongued to curse magic. Magic can get you another fish as easily as it hooked your precious Michael.

Sally turns, realization slowly dawning.

SALLY
What are you saying?

AUNT JET
She's just angry.
(to Frances)
... and old and doddering. Pay her no mind. Cookies? Orange soda? Scotch?

SALLY
You bewitched Michael? You cast a spell on him?

AUNT FRANCES
Well, you seemed to like him so much.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 52

AUNT JET
You were so unhappy. We just gave him a little encouragement.

Sally stares at them, the horror growing on her face.

SALLY
It was all just a trick. He never really loved me at all.

AUNT JET
Dear, don't be upset, we were only --

But Sally isn't having any of it.

SALLY
How dare you? You keep your magic away from me. Away from my children. No more witchcraft. Do you hear me? Never.

And with that, Sally turns and is gone in a rush. Sigh. Exchange looks. Two old women, finally at a loss for words.

53 INT. OWENS HOUSE - SALLY'S BEDROOM - MORNING 53

A form lies under an old quilt. Piles of dirty dishes and clothes are everywhere. Michael's yellow slicker hangs on the back of a chair.

Kylie stands in the doorway, dressed in coat and hat, holding her school backpack.

KYLIE
Mommy. It's time for us to go to school. Mommy?

No response from the lump under the quilt. Kylie approaches, lifts a corner of the quilt.

KYLIE
Same time as yesterday. And the day before that, and the day before that.

Kylie moves to another corner of the quilt.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: 53

KYLIE
Out of bed, sleepy head...
(off no response, moves to another corner of quilt)
Mom? I'm worried about Antonia. Do you know she borrows the car and drives around town all liquored up?
(off nothing)
Naked.
(still no response, stands and looks down at lump)
Alright. I'll see you around.

As she turns to go, a hand shoots from under the covers and grabs Kylie around the waist, pulling her onto the bed. Sally's head emerges, looking pale, fatigued. She strokes Kylie's hair.

SALLY
I'm just so... tired, baby.

KYLIE
It's okay, Mommy.

Kylie kisses her and then leaves. Sally stares at the ceiling in despair, then looks at her palm, tracing her finger along the scar from her blood oath with Gillian.

54 INT. JIMMY'S TRAILER - CLOSE ON GILLIAN'S SCAR - DAY 54

WIDEN. Gillian is laying in bed, surrounded by dozens of lit pink and red candles. She is wearing Jimmy's bandanna around her neck.

She bolts upright, looks at the scar on her palm. Gillian climbs out of bed, pulls a small vial out of her bag. Shakes a little bit of powder into a beer sitting on the night table.

Jimmy enters, almost naked, wearing a leather string around his neck with assorted tiny claws, teeth and bones.

JIMMY (JAMES)
Get back in bed.

GILLIAN
(handing him the beer)
Your breakfast's getting warm.

He shoves her back on the bed, takes a long swig of beer.

55 INT. JIMMY'S OLDSMOBILE - DRIVING 55

Gillian is driving. Inside the car, life moves in real time. But outside the window, the sun rises and sets, the moon and stars make their way across the windshield.

56 INT. OWENS HOUSE - SALLY'S BEDROOM - CLOSE ON SALLY'S SLEEPING FACE - NIGHT 56

illuminated by the moon.

GILLIAN (O.S.)
Hey.

A beat. Sally opens her eyes to find her sister laying in bed beside her.

SALLY
Hey.

Sally feels the tears coming, even before the words.

SALLY
Gilly, I'm so sad.

That's as far as she can get before the sobs come, finally, wracking. And Gillian takes her sister in her arms and holds her.

DISSOLVE TO:

57 SAME SCENE - LATER 57

Sally has finished crying, is laying in bed talking with Gillian.

SALLY
I'll never know if he really loved me or if it was just magic.

GILLIAN
He loved you, sweetie, I'm sure of it. And love is always magic.

Gillian strokes Sally's hair.

SALLY
Kylie's studying bridges. Michael was going to take her into Boston, to see the Bay and now... I'm going to be alone for the rest of my life.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: 57

GILLIAN
No you're not. We're gonna be old ladies together, remember? Like the Aunts.

SALLY
Oh, that's comforting.

The two girls laugh.

DISSOLVE TO:

58 SAME SCENE - LATER 58

Gillian sits up smoking.

GILLIAN
It was like he knew me from the first second we met. He makes the Aunts look like amateurs. He got inside me right from the start.

SALLY
What else is new.

GILLIAN
No, really, inside my head. He's gotta be with me every second. Pick my clothes, brush my hair. Hell, sometimes I have to slip him a little belladonna just to go buy a toothbrush. He can get a little crazy.

SALLY
And this is a good thing?

GILLIAN
You know what it really is, I spend so much time worrying about what he's going to do next I stop worrying about what's wrong with me.

DISSOLVE TO:

59 SAME SCENE - LATER 59

Gillian and Sally lay face-to-face, fingers intertwined.

GILLIAN
Do you still miss Mommy and Daddy?

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: 59

SALLY
Every day.

GILLIAN
Your two babies are gonna miss Michael every day. But they don't have to miss you.

SALLY
I love you, Gilly-Bean.

GILLIAN
I know.

Gillian leans down and kisses her.

DISSOLVE TO:

60 SALLY 60

lies asleep, alone.

GILLIAN (V.O.)
You've got to get out of bed now, Sal. It's time to get up.

The sun rises in the bedroom window. Sally wakes to find Gillian gone. She frowns, was it all a dream, then smells the pillow. She smiles.

SALLY
Where are my girls?

61 INT. PALMETTO - DAY (ONE YEAR LATER) 61

Sally's new store, and Sally herself a new woman. Tidy hair. Neatly-pressed. Fully in control. She is stocking colorful balms and salves with her shop assistant, CARLA, a pale young girl dressed in too much black, who stands on a ladder.

LINDA BENNETT, plump, sweet, an expatriate from the city, opens the bottles from the counter to sample their contents.

LINDA
Sally, I'm crazy about my new conditioner. The first day I used it, my husband, he...

SALLY
Ravished you?

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 61

CARLA
Jumped your bones?

Linda grins shyly.

LINDA
... Ate me alive. You should bottle the stuff. What am I saying, you do bottle the stuff.

CARLA
Sally, when you make the lotions, do you use a spell based on theosophia pneumatica, or Druidic castings?

SALLY
No, sweetheart, I use a food processor.

CARLA
Right. Okay. Maybe after I've worked here longer and you know me better, right? Cool. Got it.

SALLY
Carla, I've told you, I don't really know anything about that stuff.

LINDA
(lightening the moment)
So there's this new biology teacher on the island. Moved here from Boston. Fabulous teacher. Inspired. Single. Great-looking. Should he call you? It can be arranged.

SALLY
Thanks, Linda. But I'll pass.

LINDA
Sally, it's been two years...

SALLY
It's not about Michael. I'm just not good with men. It's kind of a condition that runs in my family.

Kylie and Antonia burst in, Antonia wearing a mouse hat and tail. Throw down their school bags.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (2) 61

KYLIE/ANTONIA
(in unison)
Hi, Mom!

SALLY
(kissing Antonia)
I wish you'd give this mouse routine a rest. Can't you at least go with something higher up on the food chain?

The girls open a drawer behind the counter to get granola bars and juice boxes.

LINDA
So what did you learn in school today?

ANTONIA
(mouth full)
Nothing.

SALLY
Come on, kids, eat that stuff outside.

The girls race out, giggling.

LINDA
Okay, here's your affirmation. I am a loving person and I deserve to be loved. Got it?

SALLY
Knock it off.

CARLA
(muttering under her breath)
I am a loving person and I deserve to be loved...

From outside, we hear children chanting:

CHILDREN (O.S.)
Witch, witch, you're a bitch!

Sally moves toward the door.

SALLY
You'd think after two hundred years, they'd come up with a better rhyme.

62 EXT. PALMETTO - CONTINUOUS ACTION - DAY 62

Sally emerges to find two mid-30s housewives, PATTY and MARJORIE, trying to restrain their 10-year-old boys.

SALLY
You boys stop that this --

PATTY
Sally, I'm so sorry --

MARJORIE
Boys will be --

Kylie's eyes are bright with tears. She lifts her finger in the air, pointing skyward like a gun ready to fire.

KYLIE
I hate you. I hope you get --

SALLY
Kylie, no.

KYLIE
I hope you get --

SALLY
Put the finger down, Kylie. I'm warning you.

CLOSEUP - PATTY AND MARJORIE

And actually looking scared.

BACK TO SCENE

KYLIE
I hope you get...

And with that Kylie throws her hand forward, pointing at the kids.

KYLIE
... chicken pox.

A moment of horrified silence. Then the boys run, with their mothers chasing after them.

SALLY
(shouting after them)
She doesn't mean it. It's a joke. She's kidding.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: 62

ANTONIA
She is not.

SALLY
(angry)
Kylie, we do not cast, we do not toy with people's lives. Do you understand? It is not a game.

But Kylie is still upset.

KYLIE
You don't cast. You probably couldn't even if you tried.

Kylie takes Antonia's hand and they run off. Sally stares after her daughters.

DISSOLVE TO:

63 INT. PALMETTO - NIGHT 63

Sally sits alone at the counter, writing a letter. Beside her, a teaspoon spins magically in her cup, unnoticed. A cacophony of CHIRPING CRICKETS can be heard from outside.

SALLY (V.O.)
Oh, Gillian, how is it that emptiness can burn? I wonder, have I always had this hole in me? I think if you lifted my heart to your ear you would hear the ocean...

Sally's VOICE begins to ECHO, and the CRICKETS' CHIRPING INTENSIFIES.

SALLY (V.O.)
I know it's just a child's dream, this dream of being whole. Of not coming awake and going to sleep each night wanting. But still, sometimes, especially when I'm tired, or the wind is warm, or the crickets sing, I still dream of a love that even time will lie down and be still for.

DISSOLVE TO:

64 EXT. WHITE-HOT SUN/JIMMY'S TRAILER (DESERT) 64

PULL BACK to reveal:

Arizona desert. Gillian emerges from Jimmy's trailer, walks cautiously TOWARDS the CAMERA.

REVERSE ANGLE

She approaches a corrugated metal shack adjacent to Jimmy's trailer. Acrid smoke billows from a makeshift stove-pipe on its roof. METALLICA BLARES from inside the shack.

Gillian opens the door.

65 INT. JIMMY'S METH LAB - CONTINUOUS ACTION - DAY 65

Jimmy, wearing a surgical mask, stands over a portable stove covered with an elaborate array of beakers and bunsen burners. Hands making evil alchemy, working powders, burning them to paste. On one finger, a familiar rattlesnake ring.

GILLIAN
(yelling over the music)
So this is what you've been doing in here? Now you're making this shit?

Jimmy whips around, knocking over a bottle of BORIC ACID which SIZZLES onto the floor. High on his own product.

JIMMY
You should've knocked.

In one swift motion, he slaps Gillian hard across the face, sending her out the door and onto the ground.

66 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON 66

Sally and the Aunts are having a conversation. Actually, that's the polite word for it.

AUNT FRANCES
Owens women have been attending the summer solstice celebration for two hundred years.

AUNT JET
Be reasonable. The children should be aware of their heritage.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

SALLY
I am not going to let my babies go all the way to the Berkshires so they can stay up all night worshipping the moon goddess --

Sally stops short. Cocks her head. The Aunts' brows furrow. All listen, as if summoned.

AUNT JET
Oh dear.

AUNT FRANCES
The girl's in trouble again.

Sally is already reaching for the PHONE by the time it RINGS.

SALLY
Gillian.

67 EXT. TURNPIKE - TRUCK STOP - AFTERNOON 67

TRUCKS RUMBLE past. Gillian smokes, on the pay phone. Her face is bruised.

GILLIAN
I'm in a bad way here.

68 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON 68

Sally has her keys in hand, moving towards the door, throws a look to the Aunts.

SALLY
Watch the girls. I'm bringing her home.

69 EXT. VALU-RITE MOTEL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT 69

Stucco bungalows. Neon room sign. No one comes here for their honeymoon. Sally's car pulls in, parks next to Jimmy's blue Oldsmobile.

70 EXT. VALU-RITE MOTEL - NIGHT 70

Sally stands at the chipped door. Touches the room number. 13.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: 70

SALLY
Figures.

She knocks. The sound of a DOOR LOCK TURNING.

71 INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION 71

Sally pushes open the door gently.

SALLY
Gilly?

A shadowy form emerges into the light. Gillian.

SALLY
Gilly?

GILLIAN
(brave)
No matter what they tell you, kidnapping is not all it's cracked up to be.

Gillian's smile is so bright it defies the tears streaming from her eyes. And with that the two sisters embrace.

After a beat, Sally holds Gillian at arm's length, taking her measure. Touches a red cut on Gillian's forehead.

GILLIAN
It's okay. It's gone numb.
(looks out into the night)
Everything's gone numb.

Sally puts her arm around Gillian's shoulders.

SALLY
Come on, honey. Let's get you out of here.

72 EXT. VALU-RITE MOTEL - PARKING LOT - WALKING - NIGHT 72

Gillian and Sally are crossing the parking lot.

GILLIAN
He got so crazy. Wouldn't let me leave. Been in the car for days. He's taking his own stuff.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: 72

GILLIAN (CONT'D)
Tried to give him some belladonna. Guess I didn't use enough. Hasn't slept in a week. Stopped by the side of the road to pee. Forgot the keys this time. Took the car, finally got away.

SALLY
(comforting)
It's okay, it's okay.

GILLIAN
(looking up)
Blood on the moon. Bad omen.

Gillian spins out of Sally's grasp, starts heading across the parking lot.

SALLY
Gilly, no! What are you doing?

GILLIAN
Gotta get my rabbit's foot. Brings me luck.

She crosses to Jimmy's Oldsmobile.

73 INT. JIMMY'S OLDSMOBILE - NIGHT 73

Gillian leans in through the open passenger door, begins rifling through Big Mac wrappers and tequila bottles, finds her bag. Suddenly, Gillian is wrenched backwards, hard, slamming into the seat, a sinewy arm now tight around her throat.

74 EXT. VALU-RITE MOTEL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT 74

SALLY
(approaching)
Gilly, forget the damn --

Sally stops abruptly. There in the car, a shadowy form has Gillian by the neck. The figure turns now, face revealed in the parking lot light.

JIMMY
You drive.

75 INT. JIMMY'S OLDSMOBILE - DRIVING - NIGHT 75

Sally drives, terrified. Jimmy is in the back with Gillian, wearing a cowboy hat -- his ringed hand on her pale thigh, and his other hand clutching a tequila bottle. Jimmy is in mid-rant.

JIMMY
Gillian talks so much about you. You don't look like sisters. One of you must be adopted. But that's what's interesting. You never know what you're gonna get. You both look real good. Goddamn, I must be into sisters.

SALLY
Where are we going?

Jimmy takes a swig from his bottle.

JIMMY
You're interrupting my reverie.

SALLY
Listen, my family knows exactly where I was going. If we're not back --

Jimmy slaps Gillian. Hard across the mouth. The sound stops Sally dead to rights.

JIMMY
New rule. You talk, she gets hit.

SALLY
(reflexive)
No, pl --

Jimmy hits Gillian again. Hard.

JIMMY
Look at that. Remote control.

76 INT. JIMMY'S OLDSMOBILE - DRIVING - LATER 76

Sally is obediently silent. Adjusts the rear-view mirror to see...

Jimmy has Gillian pulled down low in the back seat, caresses her cheek as he murmurs. Gillian, helpless, looks at Sally's eyes reflected in the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: 76

JIMMY
We have problems, difficulties communicating, you gotta come to me with your concerns. Approach me. I am not a mind-reader, but I do appreciate being treated with a little respect, not being left by the side of the road like a dog. You see my point?

GILLIAN
Yes, Jimmy. It won't happen --

JIMMY
I know that. I know it was a mistake. We all make those. That's human. But this isn't a casual thing, you and me. We're in this forever. And I'll tell you, Gillian, call it a lack of imagination, but I'm just unable to picture a life without you.

SALLY

looks up, catching Gillian's eyes in the mirror. Sally's eyes close.

GILLIAN'S EYES

close.

GILLIAN (V.O.)
Use the belladonna. It's in my bag.

SALLY

blinks, startled, forcing herself not to turn and look over her shoulder. But everything in the car seems normal. Gillian has spoken only in Sally's mind.

JIMMY
Our love is brand.

Jimmy pulls a Zippo from his vest, snap-lights it. Jimmy holds his hand over the licking flame and heats up his ring, burning both flesh and metal, unresponsive to the pain.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: (2) 76

CLOSE - GILLIAN

Terrified. But trying not to show it.

SALLY

watches in the mirror. Freaked. Jimmy closes his hand into a fist, and brings the ring within inches of Gillian's thigh.

JIMMY
You gotta let it get on your skin, stain you, make a smell, burn your insides, too, like a mark, forever.

CLOSE - GILLIAN

can't resist. A sob escapes her lips.

ANGLE

Jimmy smiles. Brings the ring closer still.

SALLY
Are you gonna drink that all yourself?

JIMMY
What?

SALLY
You heard me.
(off his stare)
You're not the only one who needs to take the edge off. Come on, give me some of that.

JIMMY
You trying to make a fool of me, Sally?

SALLY
Just gimme the goddamn bottle.

JIMMY
(admiringly)
You got a mouth on you.

Jimmy leans forward, his mouth a breath away from Sally's cheek, shoves the bottle between her legs.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: (3) 76

JIMMY
Go easy. Don't you pass out on me. I'm starting to think I want you awake tonight.
(leaning back to Gilly)
And you get to watch.

Sally takes a deep swig. She reaches across the seat, grabs the jar of belladonna from Gillian's bag.

JIMMY
You girls are okay. I'm gonna take care of you.

She tries to tap in some of the herb but the whole lot dumps into the bottle. She wipes the mouth hastily just as Jimmy reaches forward and wrenches the bottle from between her legs.

JIMMY
We're gonna be together forever.

He drinks.

77 INT. JIMMY'S OLDSMOBILE - DRIVING - LATER 77

Jimmy has chugged about a third of the bottle. Jimmy finishes singing "LONG BLACK VEIL" along with the RADIO. He turns his head toward Gillian. We see now his cheeks are streaked with silent tears. A moment of silence.

JIMMY
You left me by the side of the road like a dog, broke my heart, and you haven't once apologized.

GILLIAN
(suddenly terrified)
I'm sorry.

JIMMY
What?

GILLIAN
I'm sorry.

JIMMY
Just not good enough.

Jimmy slaps her. Hard. Undoes his pants, moving down now on top of her.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

JIMMY
You gotta show me how sorry.

CLOSE - SALLY

She's begun crying now, too, as the sounds of Jimmy beginning to rape Gillian.

JIMMY (O.S.)
Nobody leaves me. Nobody leaves me. Nobody...

And then, from the back seat, only silence. Finally...

GILLIAN (O.S.)
Jimmy? Jimmy? Sal?

78 EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT 78

Sally and Gillian stand outside the Oldsmobile. Gillian leans in and slaps Jimmy, who lies still in the back seat, eyes wide.

GILLIAN
Wake up, wake up. Oh, shit. He's dead. He's really dead.

SALLY
I thought belladonna put you to sleep.

GILLIAN
A pinch puts you to sleep. You used the whole bottle.

SALLY
I killed him. We have to go to the police.

GILLIAN
We killed him. Are you out of your mind? I am not giving this asshole the satisfaction of sending me to jail.
(looking around)
We should try and ditch the body.

SALLY
Gilly, this corpse can be linked to us in about ten thousand forensic ways. I don't think ditching is really an option.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: 78

Sally scans the road. Someone could come along soon.

GILLIAN
Let's take him home. Maybe the aunts can bring him back.

SALLY
He's dead, Gilly. The aunts won't bring back the dead. They're not those kind of witches. You know what.

GILLIAN
Paint them a picture of us in jail and they'll become those kind of witches real damn fast.

Gillian yanks Jimmy's cowboy hat down over his face. With his bottle still clutched in his hand, he could be sleeping off a drunk.

GILLIAN
Anyway, he isn't <u>that</u> dead. Maybe he just needs a little jump start.

CUT TO:

CLOSE - JIMMY

Eyes wide. His head is bouncing.

79 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - WIDER SHOT - NIGHT 79

Gilly and Sally are dragging an unwieldy and wide-eyed Jimmy, upside down, up the front steps.

GILLIAN
Ow. Ouch. He's gonna be pissed when he wakes up.

SALLY
Gilly, this may be something the aunts can't fix.

GILLIAN
It's got to be.

Suddenly, lighting illuminates the night. A CRACK of THUNDER. Sally looks up at the threatening sky.

SALLY
God definitely has a sense of humor. Now pull.

80 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 80

Sally and Gillian hoist Jimmy's body onto the kitchen table with a thud.

SALLY
You're gonna wake up the aunts.

GILLIAN
We want to wake up the aunts.

Just then the lights flicker. Sally shakes her head. She walks to the candelabra, begins rummaging drawers.

SALLY
There were matches right here. Why do those women have to move everything?

But Gillian has come up behind. Tries to blow on the candles -- from the wicks, only sparks.

GILLIAN
Cotton mouth.

Gillian fishes around in Jimmy's pants pocket. Pulls out his Zippo, snap-lights it expertly.

GILLIAN
Love is a brand. Bull shit.

Sally vanishes upstairs as Gillian begins lightning the candles.

CUT TO:

81 INT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER 81

All the candles have been lit. Shadows move on the walls. Gillian lays on the table beside Jimmy, elbow up, face on her hand.

GILLIAN
(hushed)
I'm gonna get you out of this, but when I do, we are definitely breaking up.

SALLY (O.S.)
What is wrong with you?

Gillian jumps up to face Sally standing in the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: 81

GILLIAN
New rule. Lightning storm. Corpse. No loud noises. Humor me on this, okay?

SALLY
You're a witch, Gillian, you're not supposed to be scared.
(a beat)
The aunts are gone. They took the kids to the solstice. Get it, Gilly? Gone.

Another CRACK of THUNDER. The lights dim again. Gillian has moved to the cupboard. She turns now, in her hands, the ancient spell book.

GILLIAN
We're just gonna have to raise the dead ourselves.

82 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - NIGHT 82

The lightning STORM has picked up, WINDS WHIPPING past, banging windows, RATTLING the SHUTTERS. The lights flicker.

83 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 83

The body is on its back now, candles spread in five points. Sally paces.

SALLY
Gillian, there's no way.

GILLIAN
Sal, you've got to help me.

Sally just shakes her head.

GILLIAN
Look. I know you don't do magic anymore, but doesn't this qualify as an exception? He's dead.

SALLY
No, it's not that. What we're doing here is wrong. Like we're violating... something. He's dead. He's got to stay dead. Don't you feel it?

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: 83

GILLIAN
I'll tell you what's wrong -- only seeing your kids on visiting day.
(a beat)
Never mind. It's fine, I'll do it myself.

She opens up the spell book, begins rifling the pages.

GILLIAN
(reading)
Okay. Let's see. Calum Mortatum...

Sally has moved up behind her.

SALLY
That's great. If you're trying to make sure his cow doesn't get colic.

GILLIAN
Then help me. You've never let me down before. Don't start now.

Sally moves to the book, flips four pages and stabs the parchment with her finger. Hard.

SALLY
Here. Don't you remember?

Gillian stares at the page.

GILLIAN
It's the spell we used to try to bring back Mom and Dad.

Gillian tries reading. Her Latin is terrible. She stops.

SALLY
(reading)
Vis Spiritorum. It means --

GILLIAN
Blood of the soul.

SALLY
(with power)
<u>Vis Spiritorum</u>.

SALLY AND GILLIAN
<u>Vis Spiritorum. Vis Spiritorum. vis Spiritorum</u>.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (2) 83

And with that all the candles suddenly wink out. The smoke from their wicks rises in thin lines, then defies gravity, lying flat in the hovering shape of a pentagram. Sally and Gillian stare on as the shape descends now, covering Jimmy's body.

GILLIAN
Look.

CLOSE - JIMMY'S HANDS

Starting to twitch, almost ripple like water.

ANGLE

His mouth opens, and from deep within a RATTLE, almost frog-like.

His chest heaves once, and then he is still. His hands stop moving. Sally checks his breath. His pulse.

SALLY
It didn't work. We got nothing.

GILLIAN
Not exactly nothing.

Gillian points. Bulging in his jeans, his erection is tremendous.

GILLIAN
Must be from when I got the lighter.

SALLY
We're gonna have to bury the bastard. He's stone cold dead, Gilly.

Gillian has no words.

SALLY
Gillian, he raped you. He was going to kill you. The place for him is in the ground.

CUT TO:

CLOSE - JIMMY'S RATTLESNAKE RING

Still on his dead hand. A shovel WIPES FRAME to reveal...

84 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 84

Gillian and Sally, covered in mud, are digging a hole in the Aunts' lush garden, Jimmy's corpse laying under a tree in the b.g. The RAIN is fierce.

GILLIAN
I really appreciate this.

SALLY
Just shut up and dig.

GILLIAN
I was only trying to apologize.

SALLY
My God, Gillian, what is it with you and men?

GILLIAN
We're cursed, remember?

SALLY
Oh, please.

GILLIAN
You know what the Owens curse really is? It's knowing love doesn't last. You run from men hoping not to get left and feel alone. I need a lot of men to make me forget how alone I feel.

GILLIAN
... I'm supposed to be the smart one.
(turning)
But he's so...

Gillian follows Sally's gaze.

GILLIAN
Gone.

WIDER ANGLE

Jimmy's corpse has in fact vanished. PAN UP.

Standing on the cresting hill, his form illuminated by a sudden CRACK of LIGHTNING, is a single male figure. Jimmy.

SALLY
Gilly, wait!

But Gillian is off, racing across the yard.

85 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION - NIGHT 85

Jimmy wanders across the muddy hill, his form cloaked in shadow.

JIMMY
Hank? Hank? Here, boy. Hank?

Lightning strikes again, lighting the night, his pallor revealed. Ghostly. Gillian races up to him, drenched in rain.

GILLIAN
Jimmy?

JIMMY
Hank? Hey, have you seen my dog? I think he must be here. But that doesn't make sense. Hank's dead, got hit by the school bus, been dead for years. I know you...

GILLIAN
It's me, Jimmy.

Gillian steps forward. Sally steps from the shadows where she's been watching from.

SALLY
Stay back, Gilly.

Jimmy doesn't seem to notice the exchange, keeps looking back over his shoulder.

JIMMY
Everything seems fuzzy, ma'am. Keep feeling like I forgot something, left something real important behind. Are you a friend of my mamma's? No, that's not right. What's your name?

GILLIAN
Gillian.

JIMMY
Gillian? Gillian. Oh, God, baby, where am I? What's going on?

He moves fast, too fast, is in her arms, holding her before she can stop him, burying his face in her shoulders, sobbing.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED: 85

JIMMY
Oh, God, Gil, I've got this horrible empty feeling like something's wrong with me, bad wrong, what's going on, we were in the trailer and then...

Jimmy looks up, holding her gaze in his, realization slowly dawning.

JIMMY
And then you killed me.

He grabs her throat, begins choking the life out of her. That's when the shovel hits him hard across the back.

WIDER ANGLE

Jimmy spins as Sally rears back for another blow.

He moves fast, shoving her against a tree, the shovel falling out of her hands. He slaps her. She kicks him in the balls.

CLOSE - JIMMY

Looks down a beat, puzzled. Then smiles. He backhands her, hard. Moves in for the death blow.

BACK TO SCENE

Sally grabs the fallen spade, shoves the blade up into Jimmy's chin, snapping Jimmy's head back, breaking his neck. He stares at her, then falls into the ground. Gillian rushes to her.

SALLY
This time stay dead, asshole.

HOLD ON Jimmy's lifeless face...

DISSOLVE TO:

86 CLOSE - GRAVE 86

Fresh. Hidden amidst draped wisteria and hastily-moved clumps of moss.

87 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - WIDER - MORNING 87

Sun glows in the windows of the lovely Victorian. A new day.

88 INT. OWENS HOUSE - MORNING 88

RUSH THROUGH the kitchen, upstairs, DOWN the hallway, BANGING THROUGH the door INTO...

89 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC - MORNING 89

RUSH FORWARD and BAM, ONTO Gillian's bed.

WIDER ANGLE

Kylie and Antonia bounce on the bed.

KYLIE
Aunt Gillian's home, Aunt Gillian's home.

Gilly starts awake, looks around a beat. Then smiles.

GILLIAN
I guess I am.

90 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING 90

Gillian descends, one girl hanging on each hand, to find the Aunts cooking bacon and eggs over the hot stove.

ANTONIA
We saw ladies dancing in circles around the biggest fire --

KYLIE
One lady was naked and she was doing wicker...

AUNT FRANCES
Wicca, dear.
(off Gillian)
Well, well.

GILLIAN
Yes, Aunt Frances, the harlot returns. Don't you want to ask me what I'm doing here? If they ran out of men in the big city?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: 90

AUNT FRANCES
It's nice to see you, Gillian.
I've missed you.

Frances walks up and kisses her on the forehead. Gillian is thoroughly stunned.

AUNT JET
Well, I think a celebration is most certainly in order.

Frances pulls a hot tray from the oven. The girls break into "Ooos and Ahhs."

SALLY (O.S.)
No brownies for breakfast.

Sally has just entered from outside.

AUNT JET
Nonsense, dear, chocolate is a sacrament.

Frances glances at Sally.

AUNT FRANCES
What were you doing up so early, child?

SALLY
Sudden, uncontrollable impulse to garden.

Sally has been bagging what appear to be leaves. She shows Gillian the open bag mouth. Within, Gillian's purse, the empty tequila bottles, all the debris from the car.

AUNT JET
(touching Gillian's bruise)
A little mugwort will fix that right up. Kylie, grab some from the greenhouse.

AUNT FRANCES
I hope you got rid of him.

GILLIAN
I'm through with men.

AUNT JET
Of course you are, dear.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: (2) 90

Jet kisses her sweetly.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to find Kylie, staring out the window. Her tiny form is still, riveted to something in the garden.

AUNT FRANCES (O.S.)
Kylie? What are you looking at?

KYLIE
Nothing, I guess.

As she EXITS FRAME, HOLD ON the window and Jimmy's hidden grave.

91 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY 91

Gillian and Sally stand over the makeshift grave.

GILLIAN
You think he's pissed at us?

SALLY
No, I think he's in hell watching the video and laughing his ass off.

GILLIAN
So, should we tell them?

SALLY
The Aunts? God no. The way they talk, 'Yes, that silver one, Mr. Smith, my last shovel got left out in the rain when my nieces were burying that dreadful man under the lilacs.' We'd all be in jail by dinner time.

GILLIAN
I forgot how beautiful it is here.

SALLY
Right. Just gorgeous.

Sally is staring at the grave. Gillian takes her shoulders and turns her away towards the horizon.

GILLIAN
I've made such a wreck of everything. I'm gonna try harder. From now on I'm going to lead a normal life. Just like you.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: 91

Sally looks at her sister. Smiles.

SALLY
Be careful what you wish for.

GILLIAN
Coo.

The girls laugh, then head off across the garden. HOLD ON something sitting on the cobblestoned path. A giant toad.

92 EXT. ARIZONA DESERT - DAY 92

Cops mill around. FAVOR a Camaro, trailing a plume of road dust, as it pulls up, parking by Jimmy's trailer.

CAMERA CLOSES now, TURNING AROUND a figure as he emerges from the car. Leather boots, jeans, a white shirt and sunglasses. HOLD ON him as he takes off his sunglasses, appraises the layout. This face is a landscape all its own, rich, layered, handsome. GARY HALLET begins walking towards the shack.

93 INT. JIMMY'S METH LAB - DAY 93

Dark. Illuminated by a wedge of door light. The place has been torched. Hallet kneels. Examines charred cans of lantern fuel, amidst shattered beakers and ash. No evidence to trace here.

Hallet lifts a half-melted Ziploc bag with some trace powder in the crease. Small cartoon bears decorate the cellophane. Kid friendly. Hallet crushes the bag in his hand.

94 EXT. ARIZONA DESERT - DAY 94

Hallet nods to a few cops, crosses from the small corrugated shack to the trailer. Pushes open the door.

95 INT. JIMMY'S TRAILER - DAY 95

Folks definitely left in a hurry. Dirty counter tops. Empty pizza boxes. Hallet's eyes flick over everything. Spots a lipstick-stained cigarette butt. Drops it in a plastic evidence bag.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED: 95

Hallet moves to the sink, lifts a tiny puckered cactus. Taps the hardened soil. Needs water. He turns on the faucet, gives the plant a drink.

Replacing the plant, he sees something jammed between counter and the wall. A letter addressed in an elegant calligraphy on hand-pressed parchment. Hallet opens the envelope. A tiny shower of potpourri drifts to the floor. He begins to read.

SALLY (V.O.)
'How is it that emptiness can burn? I wonder, have I always had this hole in me? I think if you lifted my heart to your ear you would hear the ocean.'

CLOSE - HALLET

Disturbed. As if these words have too much meaning for him. Too familiar.

HALLET
(reading)
'I know it's just a child's dream, this dream of being whole. Of not coming awake and going to sleep each night wanting.

Hallet stares at the page. Trying to break the strong sense of deja vu. No, more than that.

HALLET/SALLY (V.O.)
(Hallet reading)
'But still, sometimes, especially when I'm tired, or the wind is warm, or the crickets sing, I still dream of a love that even time will lie down and be still for.'

COP #1
Sure looks like he left in a hurry, huh chief?

Hallet, startled, folds the letter up quickly, heads for the trailer door.

96 EXT. ARIZONA DESERT - SUNSET 96

CRICKETS SING. Crimson light. Hallet emerges, stands with TWO COPS, one male, one female.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: 96

COP #2
Did a good job of cleaning up before he took off.

HALLET
He may not be travelling alone.

He looks at Sally's letter, at the name on the envelope.

HALLET
Looks like Jimmy's got himself a girl friend. Gillian Owens.

COP #1
Maybe he decided to cash it in and take a vacation.

HALLET
No. Jimmy's not the retiring type.

COP #2
What makes you so sure?

HALLET
I don't know, I can feel him, I guess.

Cop #2 reaches for Sally's letter.

COP #2
You want me to bag and tag that?

Hallet looks at the letter. Then puts it in his shirt pocket.

HALLET
No, I'll hang onto this. Jesus...

COP #1
What?

HALLET
Will you listen to those crickets? They're incredible.

In fact they are, their SONG RISING to a CRESCENDO.

97 INT. SCHOOL (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY 97

Sally and Gillian are rushing down the long school hallway, children's artwork hangs from the walls.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED: 97

Gillian is in tight jeans and a midriff top. Watch her as she goes; her moves are still magic.

SALLY
Come on, Gillian, hurry up. They don't like it when we're late.

Just then, a long-haired skateboarding boy careens around the corner, gliding towards them. The boy bobbles his head to stare at Gillian, wiping out against the corridor wall behind them.

SALLY
Do you even know you walk the way you walk?

GILLIAN
(to the boy)
Sorry.

SALLY
The only thing missing from this nightmare is me naked without my homework.

They push through a door into...

98 INT. SCHOOL (MARIA'S ISLAND) - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION 98

About ten PTA moms sit cramped in small desk chairs, loose-leaf binders open before them.

Sara -- the freckle-faced girl all grown up -- stands at the head of the classroom, a triangle of interconnected boxes on the board beside her. Sara draws a name from a paper-filled candy jar.

SARA
(filling in a box)
And third from the top of the tree is Linda Ben --

The door opens, producing Sally and Gillian, who begin making their way toward two empty seats at the back of the classroom.

GILLIAN
(to Sara)
Still throwing rocks?

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED: 98

Sally jerks Gillian, keeping her moving. The women murmur, exchange furtive glances. Speak now in hushed tones, still clearly audible.

PATTY
Is that a tattoo?

MARJORIE
Oh my God, it's a snake. Why would anyone want that on their arm?

NAN
You know she fucked coach Halfacre? God, look at her.

GILLIAN
(spinning)
Hi. Yes, it's me, I'm back. Gillian Owens, high school slut. Hang on to your husbands, girls.

Sally shoves Gillian toward the empty chairs.

SALLY
Patty, hi, how are your kids?

PATTY
They have chicken pox. For the third time. Thanks for asking.

SARA
Okay, people, let's focus. The next name on the phone tree is... Marjorie Taylor.

Sally and Gillian have made it to their seats.

GILLIAN
(whispering)
What exactly is a phone tree, anyway?

SALLY
It's a P.T.A. hotline. So if there's an emergency like a snow day, moms know how to contact each other.

GILLIAN
But somehow you never get picked? Life's a scam, Sal.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED: (2) 98

GILLIAN'S POV

Patty is staring back over her shoulder at Gillian, then whispers malevolently to Marjorie. Both women giggle.

Patty's BINDER RINGS SNAP SHUT, viciously pinching her fingers. Patty lets out a yelp.

BACK TO SCENE

SALLY
(hushed)
Don't.

GILLIAN
That wasn't me, it was you. You've been hiding your powers so long they're coming out of your ears.

Gillian gestures toward the podium.

SARA
And the top of the phone tree is... Sally Owens.
(puzzled)
Sally Owens.

Sally looks around the room. All the women stare. Gillian smiles at her sister.

GILLIAN
Now that, that was me.

99 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - MAGIC HOUR 99

The sun's dying rays stain the lovely old Victorian.

100 SOMEONE'S POV 100

Watching from behind the giant oak in front of the house as Sally's station wagon coasts down the street. OVER the LAUGHTER and MURMURS of Sally, Gillian, and the two girls.

Gillian's silhouette flicks a cigarette butt out of the passenger window into the street as the car disappears into the driveway.

WITH the mysterious POV as we CROSS INTO the street and HOLD OVER the still-smoking cigarette butt.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED: 100

A hand COMES INTO FRAME, lifts it. PAN UP as Gary Hallet drops the cigarette into an evidence bag. HOLD on him as he stands in the street. Watching.

101 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 101

WIND STIRS the LEAVES. Heat lightning flares, illuminating the stark silhouettes of trees.

PUSH IN to find Jimmy's grave. The flowers there have bloomed, the vegetables ripe and full. Too much growth, too fast.

Something moves. A frog jumps ACROSS FRAME. Then another, then another. The tiny amphibians linger, as if drawn to the site.

102 INT. OWENS HOUSE - NIGHT 102

OVER sounds of CONJURING. TRACK THROUGH the house, DOWN old wooden hallways and rickety flights of stairs. The DISEMBODIED WORDS GROW LOUDER.

AUNT JET (O.S.)
Barbados lime. Sea salt. Blue agave.

CAMERA FINDS Frances and Jet in nightgowns, long white hair undone, standing over the kitchen counter, chanting as they mix a mysterious brew.

AUNT FRANCES
Juice of the worm.

And with that Frances hits a button and begins a TREMENDOUS WHIRRING sound. The two women cackle as they step back to watch their creation. A massive pitcher of margaritas now whipping into delicious froth in the blender.

103 INT. OWENS HOUSE - SALLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 103

Gillian shakes a sleeping Sally awake. Sally is about to speak when the BUZZING of the BLENDER fills the room. Both girls grin.

GILLIAN & SALLY
(in unison)
Midnight margaritas.

104 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 104

Frances moves around the room, filling her glass and the girls' while Jet prepares another batch, begins shaking the salt box to a bass beat.

AUNT JET
You put the lime in the coconut...

GILLIAN
And mix it all up. You put the lime in the coconut...

SALLY & FRANCES
(in unison)
Say doctor. Say doctor.

The four Owens women begin dancing around the kitchen, singing "Lime In The Coconut," moving to their own reggae beat, finding a hidden pocket of joy in life, just a family at home in the night.

AUNT JET
My, Gillian, look at the way you move. No wonder you have so much trouble with men.

CLOSER as Jet touches her lips. Surprised at her own words.

GILLIAN
And how would you know, Aunt Jet? You haven't been touched by a man this century.

SALLY
Who do you think you are talking to her like that? You are the most self-centered --

AUNT FRANCES
Spare us any self-righteousness, young lady. You could use a little cock yourself.

AUNT JET
More unsolicited counsel from the bitch queen of Maria's Island.

AUNT FRANCES
Shut up, you frigid windbag, before I put you in a home.

The women exchange looks, all utterly stunned by the words coming out of their mouths. Sally spots something on the counter.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: 104

SALLY
Where did that come from?

But the others are already back at it, the barbs flying ever faster now.

GILLIAN
You're sick, both of you --

SALLY
(heading to the counter)
What's wrong with us?

AUNT FRANCES
Little whore --

SALLY
(at the counter)
The tequila --

GILLIAN
Dried up old --

Sally is holding something in her hand. A bottle of Cuervo 1800 draped with the necklace of teeth, bones, and claws that Jimmy wore.

SALLY
Where did this come from?

Sally hurls the BOTTLE SMASHING it against the wall, the radio falling to the floor. Needless to say, this gets everybody's attention. The RADIO SPITS FRAGMENTS OF SONGS, AUTO-SCANNING.

SALLY
Where did you get the tequila for the margaritas?

AUNT JET
The bottle was out front.

AUNT FRANCES
On the porch.

AUNT JET
We thought it was a gift.

GILLIAN
From who?

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: (2) 104

As if by way of an answer, the fallen RADIO STATICS then HOLDS A STATION. A SINGLE SONG BEGINS TO ISSUE from the SPEAKER. Jimmy's favorite tune. "LONG BLACK VEIL."

KYLIE (O.S.)
Mommy. I'm scared.

WIDEN. Kylie stands at the foot of the steps in her nightgown.

KYLIE
Who's the man in the garden?

Sally comes up behind her, looks out the window. No shape like a man there, moving in the wind-rocked moonshadow. Not really.

SALLY
There's no one there, baby.

But Sally doesn't seem so sure.

105 EXT. MARIA OWENS COTTAGE - MORNING 105

Sun breaks on the old wood and mud structure.

106 INT. MARIA OWENS COTTAGE - MORNING 106

Four old hands remove a few perfectly-placed blue slate slabs that comprise the cottage floor. Within, a lacquered wooden box.

PULL BACK to reveal Jet and Frances, both in long, black cloaks, stand over the hole. Jet lifts the lacquered box. Opens it. From within she removes a short segment of rope, its end seared and frayed.

AUNT FRANCES
They flat-out lied to us. Saying they hadn't been dabbling in spiritualism.

AUNT JET
Still, it's an awfully risky way to teach a lesson.

AUNT FRANCES
We were too easy on these girls growing up, lulled into softness by their loss. No discipline.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: 106

AUNT JET
They were just children.

AUNT FRANCES
And now? Gillian alone has probably bewitched a hundred men. And God knows what Sally will do when she finally blows. They have to take responsibility for their powers before they do some real harm.

AUNT JET
But the little ones.

Frances takes the rope, pulls free two single strands.

AUNT FRANCES
Maria's hanging rope will keep them safe.

AUNT JET
I hope so.

107 EXT. MARIA OWENS COTTAGE - MORNING 107

Kylie and Antonia stand in their nightgowns beside two packed valises covered with innumerable stickers.

The Aunts emerge. Frances bends over Antonia, Jet over Kylie, tying a strand of rope around each of their necks.

AUNT JET
Double bolo?

AUNT FRANCES
Hangman's knot.
(as Jet nods)
Now, children, here's the rule. No matter what anyone says, even Mommy, don't take these off, okay? Now swear.

KYLIE
Shit on a shingle!

ANTONIA
Poop!

Both girls giggle. Frances throws them a look.

AUNT FRANCES
We're serious, children.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED: 107

KYLIE & ANTONIA
Cross my heart and hope to die,
stick a needle in a cat's eye.

Satisfied, they kiss the children and lift their bags. The Aunts head off.

108 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING 108

Sally and Gillian sit across from each other in the kitchen nook. Deathly hangovers. OVER the LAUGHTER and CHATTER of a SMALL CROWD FROM OUTSIDE.

GILLIAN
(groggy)
What's the racket?

Sally looks out the window. Alarmed.

109 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - MINUTES LATER 109

Sally emerges from the house. A crowd has gathered around the lilac bush, which has grown to grotesque proportions. Crowds of tourists stand taking snapshots of the unnatural flowers. Kylie alternates posing and shouting barker-like.

KYLIE
Get your pictures of the giant
flowers. Twenty-five cents.

Sally walks toward the commotion as Antonia races towards her.

ANTONIA
(excited)
Somebody asked me for my
autograph!

SALLY
Okay, everybody, that's it.
Show's over.

The crowd disperses, disappointed.

SALLY
What are you doing?

KYLIE
We made five dollars.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: 109

SALLY
Where are the Aunts?

KYLIE
They went to a party in New Jersey.

SALLY
They went where --
(a beat)
What is that around your necks.
(closing)
God, take those off. They look filthy.

KYLIE
Uh-uh.

ANTONIA
No way.

The two girls race off, squealing with delight.

110 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - LATER 110

SNAK! Rusty old HEDGE SHEARS HACK violently at the slender STALKS of towering LILACS.

Clad in gardening cutoffs and a too-small tee-shirt, Sally attacks the lilacs right at the base, giving the saplings a vicious twist when they resist. Those rusty blades could chop her thumb off.

The lilacs topple over the grave, smashing their heady masses of lavender flowers into the dirt. Fat toads scatter.

OVER a TINKLE. Sally looks up, puzzled. High in the branches still hang Gillian's SPOONS, CLINKING against each other.

A Western boot comes down on the mound of earth. Sally looks up to see...

HALLET
How do you do, Miss. Gary Hallet.

Their eyes lock. A long beat.

HALLET
Are you Sally Hallet? I mean Sally Owens. Pardon me.

SALLY
Yes. I do. I mean. I am.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED: 110

HALLET
Aren't those silver beauty roses? They don't usually grow this time of year.

Hallet pulls his silver star-shaped badge from his breast pocket. The way it catches the light, it almost seems to glow.

HALLET
U.S. Attorney's office in Tucson, Miss Owens. I'm looking for a fellow named Jimmy Hawkins, do you know him?

Sally keeps staring at Hallet. What is going on here happens very rarely in life. It is, simply, love at first sight.

SALLY
He was my sister's boyfriend. He's not here.

HALLET
Then what is his car doing in front of your house?

Sally turns, looks at the Oldsmobile still parked curbside.

SALLY
We dro--

Sally stops short, puzzled. As if she said more than she intended to. Recovers as best she can.

SALLY
<u>Roses</u> can grow year-round. Just depends on what you feed them.

Hallet stands, all business.

HALLET
Miss Owens, forgive me for being plain. Your sister Gillian is an associate of a known felon. I need to talk to you and I need to talk to her and I need to search your house. You can let me look around or I can get a warrant. Choice is yours.

111 INT. OWENS HOUSE - FOYER - DAY 111

Hallet stands in the front hall as Sally runs upstairs.

SALLY
I'm just gonna go upstairs and get Gilly. I mean, she's probably had a lot more experience being interrogated. You just go ahead and turn the place upside down, make yourself at home.

FOLLOW Sally as she rushes into...

112 INT. OWENS HOUSE - SALLY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION 112

Gillian and Kylie are lying on the floor doing yoga to a videotape running on Sally's TV. Sally bursts in, slaps off the set.

SALLY
Kylie, out. There's Gummi Bears in my bedside table.

Kylie runs off.

SALLY
Okay, there's a cop downstairs looking for Jimmy. We have to get our story together now. Oh, and one more thing -- I can't seem to lie to him.
(pulling her up)
New outfit.

113 INT. OWENS HOUSE - GREENHOUSE - DAY 113

Hallet stands looking at rows of small jars of chemicals. Turns several brown bottles of herbs over in his hand. Sally watches on, made as nervous by his presence as by his investigation.

HALLET
Did you know James Hawkins?

SALLY
Yes.
(a beat)
I mean I knew of him.

HALLET
How did his car get into your driveway, Miss Owens?

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: 113

SALLY
I drove it here. Gillian had a bad time with Hawkins. He kind of kidnapped her. Gilly has truly unbelievable taste in men. She got away with his car. I picked her up on the turnpike.

HALLET
So, Mr. Hawkins wasn't with the two of you?

SALLY
Sure.

Sally touches her lips, frowns. Recovers, lightning fast.

SALLY
I assure you, Mr. Hallet, there wasn't another living soul with us when we drove onto the island.

GILLIAN (O.S.)
Hiii.

Gillian has entered in a sun dress. Even without trying, the effect is spectacular. But Hallet hardly seems to notice.

HALLET
How do you do, Ms. Owens. Can you tell me the whereabouts of Jimmy Hawkins?

GILLIAN
No idea. Look, Jimmy and I hung out for a while, okay? Sweet guy but we just didn't click.

Hallet moves towards Gillian. Moves her hair to expose the mark on her cheek.

HALLET
Sweet, huh?

GILLIAN
(turning on the charm)
Wow, you are really good.
(going for the kill)
Look, I knew zero about this guy. I guess I just have this wicked thing for cowboys.

Gillian throws him her best smile.

114 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER 114

Gillian, head in hands, sits over an ashtray brimming with cigarette butts, facing Gary Hallet. Evidence folders and criminal profiles are spread out before him. Sally paces in the b.g. This interrogation has been going on forever.

GILLIAN
I've told you, I just don't know.

SALLY
Look, we've been over this. He tried to hurt my sister. She stole his car and called me.
(struggles)
And then...

GILLIAN
And then she drove me here.

HALLET
And you have no idea where he is now?

SALLY
Um... holed up someplace I guess.

GILLIAN
Look, no offense, but travelling half way across the country for a drug dealer. Isn't that a little obsessive?

Hallet stares at her a beat.

HALLET
Time for a little show and tell.

Hallet opens his leather evidence folder, slides to black-and-white glossies across the table. Two boys. Both dead.

HALLET
I'd like you to meet two of Jimmy's customers. Rick Felder, and Billy Wiss, 18 and 19, respectively. OD'd on crystal meth.

GILLIAN
(stunned)
No.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 114

HALLET
Well, he was making it in your back yard.

GILLIAN
I didn't know anybody died.

HALLET
They're probably not the only ones. My daddy used to say the best place to find the devil is in what man does to a man. He was right.

GILLIAN
(freaked)
I didn't know.

HALLET
Maybe you didn't, Ms. Owens. But if you two girls are as skittish as birds in a snake cave and I believe you are lying to me.

Hallet waits, giving them a chance to speak. Silence. Hallet looks at his pad, at the notes he's taken.

CLOSE ON HALLET'S PAD

Nothing but stars.

BACK TO SCENE

HALLET
Know this. I'm going to get Jimmy Hawkins. It's all I do now, finding him. And if you're hiding him, I'm afraid I'm gonna get you, too.

115 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - STREET - DAY 115

CHARLIE, the tow truck guy, has just hooked his tow truck to Jimmy's Oldsmobile.

CHARLIE
I don't care what folks say, those girls can cast a spell on me any day of the week.

Hallet looks almost inclined to agree as he turns to find Gillian and Sally watching him from the window. HOLD ON the girls.

116 EXT. SCHOOL (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY 116

Hallet walks Sara from the school towards the parking lot and her car.

SARA
Old Lady Wilkes saw a man in the back of a car Sally Owens was driving the other night. Was this fellow wearing a cowboy hat?

HALLET
He might have been.

SARA
I bet he's gone missing, right?

117 INT. BARBER SHOP (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY 117

OLD MAN WILKES is getting a haircut from a not much younger BARBER. OLD LADY WILKES watches. No one under 80. Hallet listens.

OLD LADY WILKES
... like the kind Jimmy Dean wore in Giant. Had his feet up on the seat.

OLD MAN WILKES
They probably used him for a human sacrifice.

BARBER
Gave his gonads to Satan or some such.

OLD LADY WILKES
Frances and Jet murdered their boyfriends and then bathed in their blood to keep them young.

OLD MAN WILKES
I was sixteen, she was twenty-five. Kept me up all night long. Nearly killed me. God love an older woman.

OLD LADY WILKES
They're witches, you know. The whole family.

118 INT. PALMETTO - DAY 118

Hallet stands talking to Carla.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED: 118

CARLA
Witch, sure, evil, no. See witches are a source of good, it's a pagan label, that, you know, connects you with Geia who's kind of like the great earth mother. I mean sure you get your psychos now and then, animal slaughter, virgin blood balms, ritual human disembowelment, the usual, but that's really pretty rare. I mean you don't think Sally would do any of that stuff, do you?

119 INT. GARAGE (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY 119

Jimmy's Oldsmobile sits up on blocks. PUSH INTO the car to find...

Hallet leaning over the front seat, bagging fiber samples. He spots a single bit of herb leaf.

120 INT. PHARMACY (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY 120

Hallet stands across the counter from the PHARMACIST.

HALLET
Sheriff Block said you'd do some forensic work for me.
(hands over two bags)
Fiber samples and also, this -- It's some kind of herb, I think.

PHARMACIST
See what I can do. Give you a call when it's done.

The Pharmacist looks down. Then looks back up, Hallet is still standing there.

PHARMACIST
Something else I can do for you, son?

HALLET
I've been hearing a lot about the Owens women.

LITTLE BOY (O.S.)
On Halloween they all jump off the roof and fly.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: 120

WIDER - PATTY'S LITTLE BOY

his face covered with chicken pox, stares up at Hallet.

LITTLE BOY
My mommy says that if I don't go to bed on time, Spooky Sally will melt my eyes and turn my bones into pudding.

Suddenly the boy is tugged away by his mother, whispering admonitions. Hallet turns back to the pharmacist. Smiles.

HALLET
Witchcraft?

PHARMACIST
Call it what you will, I've had to get the sheriff on Jet twice for dispensing medications without a prescription. And their men do seem to have a run of bad luck. But I don't know if that makes them witches. They involved in this?

Hallet looks like he wants to answer, but instead only shrugs. He tips his hat thanks, backing away, turns, bumping right into a...

CLOSEUP - STOCK WOMAN

Crazy eyes close to his. She's older now, hair gone shock white, but the face is familiar.

BACK TO SCENE

HALLET
Sorry, ma'am. Pardon me.

LOVELORN
Cooo. Cooo.

Hallet stares at her a beat as Lovelorn cocks her head, as if she has a secret. Then she reaches up and touches his lips.

Hallet stands frozen a beat. The BELL over the front door RINGS for no apparent reason. The Lovelorn Woman smiles.

121 EXT. STREET (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY 121

A local COP uses a long chalk stick to mark parked cars.

MARIA'S ISLAND COP
You can find murder as far back as you can find the Owens. Maria Owens, the woman who founded this island, was banished here after killing her lover. The Aunts. all of 'em have lost men. Right up through Sally.

HALLET
Sally?

COP
Husband died in a mysterious accident right here on this very street. Everyone in town says witchcraft was involved.

122 EXT. MARIA OWENS COTTAGE - AFTERNOON 122

Trees sway gently in the afternoon breeze.

123 INT. OWENS COTTAGE 123

Kylie and Antonia sit on the floor, the giant spell book open before them. Gillian is rummaging through a set of shelves cluttered with books and artifacts.

KYLIE
To banish unwanted persons, it says you need blessing seeds.

GILLIAN
Cowboy cop isn't going to know what hit him.

Gillian returns with a small trunk, a mortar and pestle, sits now across from the girls.

ANTONIA
Why can't we tell Mommy?

GILLIAN
Mommy doesn't like magic. Mommy thinks if we are true and honest, everything will work out for us in the end. Mommy is very naive. And...

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: 123

GILLIAN/KYLIE/ANTIONIA
(in unison)
... We're going to help her whether she wants us to or not.

From within she finds a bag of nigella seeds, pours them into the mortar, begins grinding them into powder. Kylie reaches across and turns the pestle upside down, making the grinding easier.

GILLIAN
You're good at this.

KYLIE
It's like homework. You just have to concentrate. What's this?

From within the box, Kylie has grabbed an old piece of parchment, turns it over in her hands.

GILLIAN
(smiles)
God, I really am getting old.

KYLIE
(reading)
'He'll ride a pony backwards. His favorite shape is a star. He'll hear my call a mile away. He'll know my favorite song. He'll make pancakes. He'll have one green eye and one blue.' Weird.

GILLIAN
One day, when your mommy was a little girl, she was very lonely. So she asked the universe to send her one true love.

ANTONIA
But my daddy had brown eyes.

KYLIE
I can't wait to fall in love.

Kylie's words catch Gillian off guard, almost like a blow.

GILLIAN
Oh, sweet girl. Listen to me.
(a beat)
Do you ever put your arms straight out and spin, and spin, and spin?

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: (2) 123

ANTONIA
We do it all the time.

GILLIAN
That's what love is like. It makes your heart race, turns the world upside down. But if you're not careful, if you don't know when to stop, you can lose your balance. You can't see what's happening to the people around you. You can't see you're about to fall.

Gillian's eyes are bright. She doesn't even know she's crying.

KYLIE
Don't be sad, Aunt Gillian. I won't let you fall down.

And Kylie reaches across to Gillian and hugs her, the older women holding her close now. That's when Sally walks in. Stares at the makings of the spell.

SALLY
What the hell is going on here?

GILLIAN
We were just --

SALLY
How dare you practice with my children?
(to the girls)
Let's go.

Sally scoops up the spell book.

KYLIE
I want to stay with Aunt Gillian.

SALLY
In the house, young lady. Right now!

KYLIE
She lets me do this. She's not scared.

GILLIAN
Kylie, listen to your mother --

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: (3) 123

SALLY
(flares)
I don't need your help.

GILLIAN
Sal, I was just trying to --

SALLY
Well, don't. Haven't you caused enough trouble already?

And she's gone, towing her children. Gillian looks after her. She takes out a cigarette, glows the end into ember, begins to smoke.

124 EXT. HOT POT RESTAURANT - SUNSET 124

Umbrella tables litter a seaside patio. Folks feast on lobsters, steamers and corn. The setting sun stains the ocean red in the b.g.

125 INT. HOT POT RESTAURANT - SUNSET 125

Cafeteria style. Sally and the kids move down the line, filling their trays. A couple of women notice her, whisper, move off.

ANTONIA
Mom, why didn't you ever get your true love?

Antonia's words, so unexpected, make Sally fumble her glass. A hand catches it helpfully.

WIDER - GARY HALLET

He smiles.

SALLY
Am I under some kind of surveillance?

HALLET
Should you be? Sorry. Force of habit. No shop talk tonight.

Hallet returns the glass to Sally's tray. She can't help noticing his hands. Strong. Expressive. A long scar cuts across the back up to his arm.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED: 125

SALLY
Some decoration.

HALLET
It's a world full of Jimmy Hawkins. Sometimes you get them. Sometimes they get you.

She moves her hand, wanting to touch it, to touch him, grabs a napkin at the last moment instead. A sheer act of will.

HALLET
I've got a confession to make.

SALLY
I thought you were hoping that was my line.

HALLET
When I was following Jimmy, when I was in his trailer, I read some --

HOT POT LADY
(to Sally)
Okay, you had steamers with baked potato, no butter, dressing instead.
(to Hallet)
And you got steamers with baked potato, no butter, dressing instead. One check or two?

Sally and Hallet stand in a growing moment of silence.

KYLIE
Hello. Earth to Mom.

HALLET
I'll take mine to go. See you around.

ANTONIA
Mom. Come on.

Antonia pulls Sally towards the table. But Kylie can't stop watching Gary Hallet, whistling now to himself.

KYLIE
(sitting)
Did you hear what song he was whistling?

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED: (2) 125

Sally is trying to pay attention to her food. But she keeps glancing up at Hallet as he loads his dinner into a paper bag.

SALLY
So, how was school today?

KYLIE
Mom, it's Saturday.

Hallet is crossing now, right by the table, going to pick up plastic forks and paper salt and pepper packets.

KYLIE
What happened to the man in the garden?

This gets Sally's attention. She looks up quickly, making sure Hallet hasn't heard. When she speaks, her voice is hushed.

SALLY
(stirring her tea)
Do you still see him?

KYLIE
(lying)
No.

Sally is so busy watching Hallet she doesn't notice the spoon in her cup has continued spinning on its own accord.

SALLY
You know how sometimes when you look at the sun too long you can still see it after you look away? That's all he was, an after-image.

KYLIE
Or a ghost.

SALLY
There's no such thing as ghosts.

KYLIE
My teacher says that.
(as Sally nods)
My teacher says there's no such thing as witches either.

Sally notices her spinning spoon. Stops it by hand.

126 EXT. PHARMACY (MARIA'S ISLAND) - NIGHT 126

Gary Hallet stands with the Pharmacist, who is locking up for the night.

HALLET
Thanks for your help.

He's staring at his bagged evidence sample, now stapled to a sheet of pharmacy stationery, as he walks off down the block.

127 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 127

A mesh of dark vines has grown over Jimmy's grave. They coil around the trees, sprouting blood-red thorns. The lilacs have grown back. The ground is alive with CROAKING FROGS.

128 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT 128

Gillian steps out onto the front porch. She seems pale, hugging a quilt around her shoulders, not well. The yard is quiet. Shadows move in the wind.

GILLIAN
Hello? Is somebody there? Sal?

Nothing. Just a CREAKING BRANCH, a lazy SKITTERING of LEAVES.

129 INT. LIBRARY (MARIA'S ISLAND) - NIGHT 129

Oak. Green reading lamps. The signature room for any sleepy New England town. Gary Hallet sits at a long reading table covered with various tomes on witchcraft. Adjusts the light, his eye caught now by an old oil painting hanging on the wall.

CLOSEUP - PAINTING

A woman stands banging on the door of an old cottage. Her feet are bloodied. Around her shimmers an almost ethereal glow. Her face looks like Sally's.

LIBRARIAN (O.S.)
She kind of grabs your attention and won't let go, don't you think?

HALLET
She sure does.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: 129

WIDER - LIBRARIAN

stands near him, a massive botanical encyclopedia in her hands.

LIBRARIAN
That's Maria Owens. She founded the island. She loved a married man and when he rejected her, she hexed him, drowned him on dry land in the middle of a heat wave. Local legend. Tourists love it.

The Librarian lifts the small tagged evidence bag stapled on stationery, reads the Pharmacist's scrawl.

HALLET
Belladonna.

The Librarian drops the encyclopedia on the table, begins riffling pages.

LIBRARIAN
Okay, here we go. Belladonna. Otherwise known as deadly nightshade. It's lethal in high doses. One of the oldest poisons. A part of certain --

HALLET
(not happy)
Rituals and ceremonies commonly used by witches.

LIBRARIAN
Why, yes, Mr. Hallet, that's right. It's a virtual staple of the black-hatted. See, you knew more than you thought you did.

Hallet covers his mouth and nods mutely. HOLD on Maria Owens, hands bloodied, expression frozen in sorrow until the end of time.

130 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT 130

Gillian is laying in bed, sleeping fitfully. Her hair is matted, and she's muttering in her nightmare, pushing away some phantom again and again.

GILLIAN
No. No. No.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED: 130

PULL BACK to reveal: Kylie lays in bed beside a sleeping Antonia, staring at Gillian. The small girl's expression is a mask of terror. RUSH IN CLOSE ON the frightened child.

KYLIE'S POV

She sees what we cannot. Sitting on the edge of the bed, in cowboy boots and hat, is Jimmy, close over Gillian, touching her face, leaning down to kiss her.

KYLIE

gasps. And, impossibly, Jimmy stops, slowly turning his gaze to face her, holding her gaze with his mean, black eyes. He smiles at the girl, then lifts a single finger to his lips.

JIMMY
Shhh.

131 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - MORNING 131

HALLET (V.O.)
I don't like it when people lie.

The world is grey. No sun at all.

132 INT. OWENS HOUSE - GREENHOUSE - MORNING 132

Sally and Hallet stand.

HALLET
We found fibers in the back of the car consistent with James Hawkins' clothing.

SALLY
It was his car, for God's sake.

HALLET
We found traces of nightshade. Belladonna. Devil's tea.

SALLY
A sedative. People put it in tea to calm their nerves.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: 132

HALLET
Also a poison. Commonly used in witchcraft. Maybe by a family of witches who keep losing their husbands to mysterious circumstances.

Sally stares at him, a long, lethal beat. In his eyes, the scorn she has seen for so many years.

SALLY
Oh. That's right. You're right. You've found me out. We're witches. Boo. Come around on Halloween and you'll really see something. We eat black cats, steal babies, kill our husbands. Stay away. Don't touch us and whatever you do don't love us. Oh, you're right, Hallet. We're all monsters, just like everyone in this town says.

Sally turns her head, eyes red. Hallet moves to her, his voice becoming gentle.

HALLET
Miss Owens. Sally. You have to understand how strange all this looks...

SALLY
Oh, I know how strange this looks.
(a beat)
Listen, magic's not spells and potions.

Sally touches Hallet's chest, her fingers over his heart.

SALLY
That badge of yours. It's just a star, another symbol. It can't really stop criminals in their tracks. It has power because you believe in it. Why can't you believe in me?

Hallet stares at her. Wants to. But he's still a cop.

HALLET
Ms. Owens, I have to ask you, did you kill James Hawkins?

Sally stares at him, years of defenses coming back up.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (2) 132

SALLY
(witchy)
A couple of times.

Just then, Kylie and Antonia rush in.

ANTONIA
We're having breakfast. Pancakes.

KYLIE
Do you know how to make pancakes?

The girls exchange a giggle.

HALLET
Sure I do, young lady.

KYLIE
Good. You cook.

And with that the kids are gone, Sally trailing them out the door.

SALLY
This way you can make sure we don't leave town.

She's gone. Hallet stares after her. He examines the array of plants. Clears a label. Nightshade. He removes an evidence bag.

133 INT. KITCHEN - PANCAKE - MINUTES LATER 133

flips in midair.

WIDER

Sun streams in through the windows. Hallet and Antonia stand side by side at the stove. Antonia's eyes are wide.

ANTONIA
Wow.

HALLET
Ever seen a saguaro cactus? Well, this is a saguaro pancake.

Hallet splotches more batter on the griddle. A pancake forms in the shape of a cactus.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: 133

HALLET
A cactus is kind of eccentric.
Some people don't understand how
special they are.

Hallet flips the flapjack, singing. Sally crosses from the cellar, singing the same song. Both stop, surprised by the coincidence. Antonia tears off into...

134 INT. PANTRY - MORNING 134

Gillian, dark circles under her eyes and looking sleep-deprived, stands with Kylie over a small bowl, pouring the herbal powder they made the day before. The spell book lies open before her.

GILLIAN
Can't you just see cowboy cop
waking up in the Congo going,
'Hey, y'all, what happened?'

Gillian pours syrup into the bowl. The bottle is nearly empty.

GILLIAN
More syrup.

She heads to the back of the pantry.

ANTONIA
(whispering)
He flips pancakes. He knows Mom's
favorite song.

WITH Kylie and Antonia as they bang back INTO...

135 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION 135

As Hallet loads the platter with pancakes, Gillian emerges from the pantry.

GILLIAN
Everybody ready?

She's got the pitcher of syrup in her hands.

SALLY
Oops. Napkins.

Sally goes to get the napkins as Hallet begins serving pancakes onto everyone's plates.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED: 135

KYLIE
Can you ride a pony backwards?

HALLET
Funny question. Want a funny answer? My granddaddy had a little pony named Mac and I sure enough used to ride him backwards when I wasn't any bigger than you.

Kylie and Antonia lock eyes. Sally joins them, finally sits.

GILLIAN
Well, isn't this cozy. Gary, can I call you Gary? Here you go.

Gillian reaches for the syrup. Suddenly, Kylie grabs the pitcher. With cackles of joy the girls race out of the house with the syrup.

136 EXT. BEACH (MARIA'S ISLAND) - MORNING 136

The two girls run to the shore line, dancing like tiny nymphs as they pour the syrup into the tide with shrieks of delight.

137 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION 137

The adults watch in puzzled amazement.

GILLIAN
If they weren't so beautiful, I'd have to kill them.

A REPTILIAN RETCHING sound. All look down. A large TOAD has hopped onto the path, beginning now to heave and RETCH. All watch, spellbound. And then, impossibly, it vomits a silver rattlesnake ring. Jimmy's.

Hallet lifts the ring, turns now to the Owens women. His eyes are sharp, all business.

HALLET
What's this?

Hallet holds Sally's stare a beat, as if to say, please don't lie.

SALLY
It's --

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED: 137

GILLIAN
Oh, gosh, the junk we have laying around the house.

Though he speaks now to Gillian, his gaze is still on Sally.

HALLET
This is your ring, then?

GILLIAN
Oh, yes, definitely. Absolutely. Had it for years. Right, Sal?

But Sally just holds Hallet's stare. Finally, she just closes her eyes and looks away. Hallet seems as unhappy to say the words that come now as they are to hear them.

HALLET
Let me say this plain as I can. You are lying. At best, you are guilty of harboring a fugitive. At worst, you are suspects in this murder. Do not leave town. Get yourselves an attorney.

And with that, Hallet is gone, the GATE SWINGING the only sound. When Sally speaks, her words are barely audible.

SALLY
I'm sorry.

GILLIAN
Yeah. Why didn't you back me up?

Sally turns, her eyes bright with tears.

SALLY
I wasn't talking to you

And with that Sally goes back into the house, leaving Gillian alone.

138 INT. KITCHEN - MORNING (LATER) 138

Sally is throwing away the makings of an idyllic breakfast that was never to be. Gillian enters.

GILLIAN
God, I'm not sleeping for shit.

No response from Sally. Gillian begins doing the dishes.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED: 138

GILLIAN
Aunt Frances would kill you if she saw you stacking plates.

Sally barely glances at her sister over her shoulder, continues cleaning up.

GILLIAN
Listen, we just stick to our stories. No body, no crime, you know.

Sally spins, slams her hand down on the counter.

CLOSE - WINDOW

slams shut.

BACK TO SCENE

SALLY
I'm. Me. Mine. God, Gillian, it's all you ever think about. You.

Gillian stares at her, the curtains billowing for a moment, then turns, heads for the door.

GILLIAN
I'm not going to fight you, Sal.

SALLY
Don't walk away from me. What were you thinking when you brought him into our life? Did you think about my daughters? About me, or the aunts? Have you ever thought about anyone but yourself?

The POTS OVERHEAD begin to BANG against each other, as Gillian spins, rage in her eyes.

GILLIAN
I'm the one who's selfish? What about you? What have you done except hide in your little cocoon and protect yourself?

The stack of PLATES CRACK and fall into the sink.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED: (2) 138

GILLIAN
You try to pretend you're not who you are. And now you're doing the same thing to Kylie.

All the PAPER in the room BURSTS into FLAMES.

SALLY
You leave Kylie out of this.

GILLIAN
Or what?

The CABINET DOORS CRACK. A beat. Then Sally looks away.

SALLY
You know something, you're right. We <u>are</u> all selfish. All we've ever done is use our magic to get what we want -- Michael, Jimmy, our parents back. Maybe that's what's been wrong with the Owens women all along.

And with that, Sally grabs her sweater of the rack.

GILLIAN
Where are you going? What are you going to do?

But she is gone, out the door.

139 EXT. SHADY VIEW HOTEL (MARIA'S ISLAND) - AFTERNOON 139

Small cottages sit by the sea.

140 INT. HALLET'S BUNGALOW (SHADY VIEW HOTEL) - CLOSE ON JIMMY'S SNAKE RING - AFTERNOON 140

Sits atop photos of the very same ring and Jimmy's mugshots.

WIDER

Hallet sits over evidence spread out on the hotel bed, lifts a surveillance photo of Sally.

CLOSE - HALLET'S FACE

Profoundly disturbed.

141 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC - AFTERNOON 141

Gillian sits in a rocking chair by the window, dozing. Once more her sleep seems fitful. Suddenly her eyes open and she shrieks.

Gillian jumps up, pulling up her skirt. There, on her leg, a single imprint, like a brand. The shape into her flesh is frighteningly familiar. Jimmy's rattlesnake ring.

142 INT. HALLET'S BUNGALOW (SHADY VIEW HOTEL) - AFTERNOON 142

A KNOCK at the door. Hallet opens the door. Sally.

SALLY
I need to talk to you.

Hallet goes to the table and lifts his tape recorder. Turns it on.

HALLET
I advise you not to say anything without a lawyer present.

SALLY
No. I have to get this out. You're wrong about me. I didn't kill Jimmy with the nightshade.
(holds his eyes)
I killed him with the shove. Caught him with the blade right under his chin and snapped his neck. He's buried in my back yard.

HALLET
Why are you telling me this?

SALLY
You know, I never believed in monsters. Until I met Jimmy Hawkins. Thought they were just noise to scare the children. But they're real, aren't they?

Hallet nods. He's seen more than most would care to know.

SALLY
Look, I'm a widow with two little kids. Hawkins was evil. What good will sending me to jail do?

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED: 142

HALLET
I took an oath to uphold the law. I have an obligation --

SALLY
You have an obligation to justice. I have an obligation to my children. Can't we leave it at that? God, if only I could make you understand.

HALLET
'How can emptiness burn?' I understand you, Sally Owens.

He reaches into his breast pocket, withdraws her letter.

HALLET
I found it in Hawkins' trailer. Can't even say why it had the effect on me it did. But when I'm square with myself, late at night in this dark little room, I have to admit it's your letter as much as Jimmy Hawkins that brought me across the country. That brought me to you. You see, I could have written it myself.

He has moved to her now, is touching her hair, their faces close, a breath apart.

HALLET
I don't want to want you the way I do.

SALLY
I don't want to want you either.

That's about all she can get out and she's in his arms, mouths pressed together, bodies close, kissing like eating when you've been starved your whole life.

PETALS WIPE the FRAME. Multi-colored rainbow petals of the kind created by Sally's love spell and we are...

143 EXT. ARIZONA DESERT - TWENTY YEARS EARLIER 143

A young Hallet (10) in a cowboy hat sits backwards on a white pony, staring up at the star-filled sky. A shooting star streaks across the horizon. PETALS WIPE the FRAME, sending us back to...

144 INT. SHADY VIEW HOTEL - HALLET'S BUNGALOW - AFTERNOON 144
(PRESENT)

The way Sally and Hallet move against each other there's no reason to believe this will ever stop. But it does, finally, Sally pulls away, stepping back, dazed, as if drunk.

SALLY
This is insane.

He's trying to clear his head.

HALLET
Sally, I...

SALLY
I can't do this. This isn't why I came here. I can't --

And she's gone, out the door. Hallet stares after her, then at the tape recorder still spinning on the table. He rips out the tape, unspooling in his hands.

145 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - AFTERNOON 145

All hell has broken loose. WINDOWS SHAKE. SHUTTERS CREAK. It seems almost as if the house itself is alive, shut like an angry face.

PUSH UP PAST the back steps where toads are massed like a thick, dark, crepestulating carpet. PUSH INSIDE...

146 INT. OWENS HOUSE - AFTERNOON 146

TRACK THROUGH the house as POTS BANG in the wind and curtains billow, UP the steps, DOWN the upstairs hallway, lights flickering, shorting on and off, PUSH INTO...

147 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC - AFTERNOON 147

The lights are gone here altogether. The room is illuminated by candlelight. Gillian lays on the bed, feverish, sick.

Antonia sits in the corner of the room, spell book open before her. Kylie is lighting candles in a pentagram around the bed.

ANTONIA
What's wrong with her?

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED: 147

KYLIE
It's him.

ANTONIA
Is he here?

KYLIE
Yeah. Just find the right page.

148 KYLIE'S POV 148

Jimmy is sitting right over Gillian, trying to kiss her. Gillian is pushing him back, apparently meeting physical resistance. She's weakening, not long for this battle.

149 BACK TO SCENE 149

KYLIE
Hurry. He's trying to get in her.

Antonia begins to read as Kylie runs from candle to candle, blowing them into life. Jimmy is about to kiss her, he looks up.

JIMMY
Don't do that, sweetheart, we're gonna be friends.

Kylie lights the last candle.

150 KYLIE'S POV 150

Suddenly a shimmering dome, like liquid frosted glass, shoots up around the pentacle. Jimmy is hurled from within, out the door into the hallway on his ass.

151 BACK TO SCENE 151

ANTONIA
Did it work?

KYLIE
Keep reading.

152 KYLIE'S POV 152

A figure steps into the empty door frame, brushing himself off, looks at Kylie, furious.

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED: 152

JIMMY
I'm gonna eat you up in one bite.

Jimmy swipes at Antonia, who is closer but his hand passes right through her, her rope necklace suddenly glowing red.

ANTONIA
It tickles.

JIMMY
The old bitches are good. Not good enough.

He turns now, puts his hand against the surface of the dome and presses against it, penetrating the spell, starting to move towards Gillian like a man moving through molasses.

153 BACK TO SCENE 153

KYLIE
He's too strong.

154 KYLIE'S POV 154

Jimmy is closing on Gillian again.

155 BACK TO SCENE 155

Kylie jumps up, running through Jimmy's spectral form onto the bed, pulling her necklace off.

ANTONIA
Kylie, no, the aunts said --

But Kylie has leaped onto Gillian's chest, is tying the rope around Gillian's neck.

JIMMY
No.

156 KYLIE'S POV 156

Jimmy swings for Kylie, grabbing her hair, her silky locks burning in his hand. Jerks her towards him.

157 BACK TO SCENE 157

But she slithers away and races out the door, screaming.

KYLIE
Mommy. Help. Mommy!!

158 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - AFTERNOON 158

Kylie races from the front of the house. The attic WINDOW EXPLODES outward as an invisible force hurls after her. Gillian, still weak, stumbles to the window.

GILLIAN
No. Take me.

159 INT. OWENS HOUSE - ATTIC - AFTERNOON 159

Gillian rips the necklace off, her face streaming with tears.

160 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - STREET - AFTERNOON 160

Sally walks home from Hallet's, head bowed, awash in sadness. O.S. she hears a faint call.

KYLIE (O.S.)
(distant)
Mommy.

Sally looks up. In the distance Kylie is racing towards her, being pursued by... what? At times it seems to be a swirling storm of tiny meteors, shooting towards her, leaving trails, little more than a blur, but then for seconds a shape can be seen amidst the streaks, resolving itself into semi-corporeal form. Jimmy.

SALLY
(racing forward)
No!

161 INT. SHADY VIEW HOTEL - HALLET'S BUNGALOW - AFTERNOON 161

Hallet is sitting at his desk, Sally's letter open before him. He looks up suddenly as if called from a mile away.

162 EXT. MARIA'S ISLAND - STREET - NIGHT/AFTERNOON 162

Kylie is racing right INTO CAMERA, her tiny face terrified, the swirling Jimmy-force behind her, finally coalescing into solid form as he grabs her, lifting her high into the air.

(CONTINUED)

162 CONTINUED: 162

Sally flies INTO FRAME, leaping high, grabbing her daughter from the specter's grasp, tucking her baby in her bosom and rolling into the pluming road dust.

SALLY
Baby? Baby, are you okay?

But Kylie's eyes are peeled wide with terror.

163 SALLY'S POV 163

Jimmy has formed now, closing in on her, pissed.

JIMMY
You don't ever disrespect me.

And with that he roars and leaps, like an animal, body elongating in an arc toward the two Owens. They're done for.

A sudden blast of blue light hits Jimmy, blowing him backwards like a wind.

164 WIDER ANGLE 164

Hallet stands next to the women, his badge in his hand, arm extended, a powerful magic force issuing from the single talisman.

The magic force is blasting into Jimmy, dispelling him upwards in a rush of energy that sears the willows, their leaves weeping and burning in its wake.

SALLY
Wow.

HALLET
(off his badge)
You're telling me.

165 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SUNSET 165

Sally is tucking Kylie and Antonia beneath a giant quilt in front of the fire.

SALLY
You're so brave. You're both so brave.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED: 165

KYLIE
I don't see him anymore, Mommy. He's gone.

She kisses their heads, crosses to Gillian, who sits in rocker, hands her a cup of tea.

SALLY
Drink this, baby, you'll feel better. It's all over now.

But Gillian doesn't answer. Just gestures with her head out the window. Hallet stands outside. Waiting.

166 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - SUNSET 166

Hallet and Sally stand facing each other. The sky is stained a deep orange. A SYMPHONY of CRICKETS.

HALLET
I love that sound.

SALLY
I know.

The two stand together a moment. Silent.

SALLY
Hallet, listen...

HALLET
No, I think it's best you listen now. I don't know what just happened. Maybe it was the strange things wind can do or maybe it was the tricks love can play on a man's mind. But I'm still worried about you.

SALLY
We're safe from Jimmy Hawkins. Are we safe from you?

HALLET
I believe in the law. And I believe in you, Sally Owens, I just don't know how to make the two things go together. If we could...

(CONTINUED)

166 CONTINUED: 166

SALLY
You'd never know if I was with you because I loved you or because I didn't want to go to jail.

HALLET
All relationships have problems.

Sally laughs. The sound is like music to him.

SALLY
You have to decide if you're going to turn me in, Hallet. Without any hope of us.

HALLET
But I'm afraid you were the one I've been looking for my whole life. My one true love.

SALLY
There's no one true love. I know that now. It's not in the cards for me anyway.

He stares at her, leans in and kisses her lips. Soft, perfect. Pulls back and stares at her a beat. The SPOONS RING in the air. Sally's laugh hides a sob.

HALLET
My grandfather used to say that sound was angels singing.

Then he tips his hat, turns, off into the shadows and then gone. Sally watches him go, her face a portrait of pain and loss. PULL BACK AND UP.

167 INT. OWENS HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT 167

Sally enters to find Gillian standing in the shadow, arms wide open. Sally collapses into her sister's embrace, weeping.

Gillian whispers sounds of comfort. Then she licks her ear.

GILLIAN
I'm gonna eat you up in one bite.

Sally pushes Gillian away, repulsed. Gillian just smiles. Slaps Sally, sending her smashing into the wall.

(CONTINUED)

167 CONTINUED: 167

KYLIE & ANTONIA (O.S.)
Mommy. Mommy?

Gillian turns. The two kids are standing there, staring at her.

GILLIAN
Sisters. I am so into sisters.

Sally pulls herself up in the b.g. Something about her is different. Unleashed. Her hair is loose and her eyes are beginning to almost glow with magical power. The air around her seems to crackle.

SALLY
You stay away from my kids.

And with that, she hauls off and delivers the most furious roundhouse punch, powered by magic, sending Gillian flying across the kitchen and sliding across the floor.

The front door opens just as Gillian slams up into the wall, down for the count.

AUNT JET
(entering)
Oh, dear, I fear we have not arrived in the nick of time.

168 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 168

OVER a MOAN. Gillian's voice, tinged with something darker, more evil. Jet and Sally close the windows, drawing curtains, closing shutters.

AUNT JET
Candles. We need lots of candles.

Jet keeps glancing nervously over her shoulder, towards something in the center of the room we do not see.

ANTONIA
I think she's cold. She's shivering.

Antonia trails Kylie to a cupboard, where they begin loading up with votive candles. They too are preoccupied with the room's center.

(CONTINUED)

168 CONTINUED: 168

AUNT JET
He's squatting inside her like a toad, where he'll stay until he's consumed her very soul.

Frances enters, stands in the door, spell book in hand.

AUNT FRANCES
This is what comes of dabbling.

AUNT JET
Our fault as well. We wanted to teach you girls a lesson. Now I fear we have taught you too well.

OVER another MOAN, STRONGER now. The sounds are coming from the center of the room.

AUNT FRANCES
To banish him...

AUNT JET
We have to force his spirit back into the grave.

AUNT FRANCES
We'll need a full coven.

AUNT JET
Nine women. A dozen's better.

AUNT FRANCES
(to Sally)
Do you have any friends?

Sally looks down. She doesn't. But then...

SALLY
(looking up)
Wait...

Sally heads out the door, towards the kitchen. The GRUNTING has taken form, changing now into a GHASTLY CHUCKLE.

KYLIE
I'm scared.

AUNT FRANCES
So am I, child. So am I.

169 IN CENTER OF ROOM 169

The floor has been cleared of furniture, the rug rolled back. A pentagram has been drawn on the floor. In the center sits Gillian, legs crossed, chuckling. She looks up slowly. And grins.

170 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 170

Sally is on the phone. By her hand, the Island School Handbook binder is open to the "PTA Phone Tree."

SALLY OWENS
Linda. Hi, it's Sally. I'm activating the phone tree. You know, all that stuff everyone whispers about me, spells and hexes and jumping off the roof at Halloween -- Here's the thing. They're not entirely wrong. What I'm saying is --
(deep breath)
I am a witch.

171 INT. LINDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 171

HOLD ON her face a long beat.

SALLY (V.O.)
Linda? Linda?

LINDA
(finally)
What a fabulous affirmation!

172 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 172

The women continue to prepare the room. Gillian sits, hugging herself, rocking back and forth.

Kylie and Antonia take a running start to shove a couch into a corner. They hit the sofa hard, sliding across the floor. Suddenly, Antonia shrieks. The couch has left a glistening trail of CROAKING FROGS.

173 INT. CARLA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 173

Lots of black.

CARLA
I just got off the phone with Linda Bennett. I've got the best news. Sally Owens is a witch. Demons, here we come.

174 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 174

Wielding kitchen brooms taller than they are, Antonia and Kylie sweep the toads towards the door to the back porch, chanting --

KYLIE & ANTONIA
Sombatah-say-tay-pada, bone-taroh, spirit be gone...

175 INT. SCHOOL (MARIA'S ISLAND) - CLASSROOM - NIGHT 175

Sara, the freckle-faced woman, is on the phone.

SARA
Apparently her sister just got out of a very bad relationship, and now the guy will not leave her alone. Also, can you bring a broom?

176 INT. PATTY'S CAR - PARKED - NIGHT 176

Patty is on her car phone.

PATTY
A coven. Yes, coven. C-O-V-E-N.

177 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 177

The pentacle is now lined with candles. Frances and the girls are gone now, Jet putting the final touches on the room.

GILLIAN (O.S.)
Aunt Jet?

Her voice is normal now. Jet turns from the doorway. Gillian seems battered, beaten from inside, but normal again. No sign of Jimmy.

GILLIAN
What's happening to me?

Jet walks towards the circle. Gillian is crying now.

AUNT JET
You've got to fight him, sweetheart. Push him out.

Jet is almost to the edge of the circle. Suddenly, Gillian looks up, her eyes turning malevolent as Jimmy takes control of her again.

(CONTINUED)

177 CONTINUED: 177

GILLIAN
Fight this, you bitch.

And she leaps fast towards Jet, hitting an invisible wall at the perimeter of the circle and bouncing back, falling, stunned to the ground. Gillian looks up and gives an almost animal-like snarl.

178 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT 178

Kylie and Antonia finish sweeping out the frogs.

KYLIE
I see headlights!

179 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 179

Marjorie and Nan poke their heads hesitantly in the back door. They enter, each carrying a broom.

MARJORIE
God, look at this place.
(a beat)
It's great.

NAN
Everything is so Martha Stewart.

Aunt Frances is hunched at the stove over a large cauldron.

AUNT FRANCES
Come in. Children, give our sisters a spoon.

Kylie and Antonia scramble to hand them long-handled, wooden spoons.

AUNT FRANCES
Just give this a few turns.

-- beckoning them to stir the cauldron. Nan and Marjorie flinch at the unpleasant smell. Frances heads off.

AUNT FRANCES
Great for the pores. Not that the two of you need any help in the beauty department.

Nan and Marjorie exchange a flattered look and begin to stir.

180 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 180

Headlights caravan through the gates. The area behind the garden fills with cars and station wagons. A minivan pulls up with a sticker: "My child is an honor student at Maria's Island School."

181 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 181

Excited female voices. PTA moms have crowded into the kitchen, each with a broom from home. Marjorie and Linda share their psychic experiences:

MARJORIE
Once I was halfway across town and my baby had a nightmare, and I swear to God I could hear him crying.

AUNT JET
(reassuring pat)
There's a little witch in every woman, dear.

Patty, out of breath, arrives with a toddler on her hip.

PATTY
I'm sorry -- My husband took Angela to her Little League banquet, and I couldn't leave Brandon with the sitter, poor baby, he's teething.

AUNT FRANCES
Teething? Oh. We'll fix that.

-- Swooping the toddler off into the pantry. Sara calls:

SARA
He's allergic to wheat!

182 INT. OWENS HOUSE - PANTRY - CONTINUOUS ACTION 182

Aunt Frances takes down a flask of whiskey. To the toddler:

AUNT FRANCES
No wheat? How do you feel about rye?

183 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 183

Gillian sits in the circle.

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED: 183

Sally is standing just outside the perimeter.

SALLY
I'm going to take care of this, but I need you to be strong.

Gillian looks up. Her face is streaming with tears.

GILLIAN
Sal. Sal. I feel him moving around inside me. Oh, God, Sally, help me.

184 CLOSE ON GILLIAN'S FACE 184

Jimmy's expression seems to push out through the side of her cheek, then recede.

185 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 185

Linda Bennett makes a head count of all the women --

LINDA
We're short two! Who's not here?

DEBBIE (older, Janet Reno look-alike) hurries in the back door, half-soaked, carrying a Dust Buster instead of a broom --

DEBBIE
Is this okay? It's all I had.

Behind her through the door comes: the Lovelorn woman.

Aunt Jet and Aunt Frances are stopped in their tracks. The Lovelorn woman takes a hesitant step, uncertain of her welcome.

LOVELORN
Cooo.

The women just look at her. But Aunt Frances comes forward and kisses her lightly on the lips. The Lovelorn woman shudders.

AUNT FRANCES
So glad you could come. We'll let bygones be bygones, shall we?

Lovelorn smiles radiantly, touches her throat.

(CONTINUED)

185 CONTINUED: 185

LOVELORN
Thank you.

AUNT FRANCES
Alright, girls, let's begin.

186 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CLOSE ON LINDA - NIGHT 186

LINDA
Holy shit.

WIDEN. All the women have gathered just inside the doorway, stand staring at Gillian. Entirely freaked out.

CARLA
(softly)
I've been strung out over a guy before, but this...

PATTY
I'm not sure I can be here right now.

Jet begins moving about the room.

AUNT JET
This may seem strange to you, but this is part of our history. Our strength comes from our belief in each other, from our belief in ourselves. Whatever you want to call it -- magic, witchcraft -- it's all just faith. To find the power to banish this man, each and every one of you must be as strong today, right now, as you will ever be. For it is only our strength together, our hearts beating as one heart, that can save this child's life.

Jet arranges the women around the circle, each holding their brooms before them like staffs. Every broom is different -- red handles, yellow, orange -- some straws old-fashioned and deep, others plastic and angled.

KYLIE
You <u>want</u> me to do magic?

SALLY
Yes. We'll do it together.

Mother and daughter lock eyes. Then exchange a smile.

187 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN/BACK STAIRS - NIGHT 187

Frances places the happy toddler under Maria Owens' portrait.

AUNT JET
Maria will keep you perfectly safe.

She leaves butcher knives on the step just above and below the landing, blades facing away from the child.

AUNT JET
Don't touch.

188 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 188

The Aunts and the PTA moms stand just outside the magic circle, each holding a broom like a staff.

AUNT FRANCES
We are in the presence of a demon.

AUNT JET
Gillian, do you want to be free?

The WALLS CREAK menacingly.

GILLIAN
(weak)
Yes.

AUNT FRANCES
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

Sally and Aunt Jet pick it up, thumping their brooms.

SALLY AND AUNT JET
Fie on you, cur, I curse you, out!

The PTA moms pick it up, their brooms landing in punctuation.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

A milk-GLASS LAMP SHADE SHATTERS. PTA moms scream. The MIRROR near Patty CRACKS. The chant builds, and at last Gillian begins.

GILLIAN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you, out!

(CONTINUED)

188 CONTINUED: 188

But the chant's increasing intensity seems to have the opposite effect. With each intonation, Jimmy's fury seems to increase, as if he is pummeling Gillian from the inside.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

Gillian's torso is wrecked with blows from within.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

Her legs buckle, she hits the ground, hard.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

She is lifted into the air and dropped on the ground.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

Smash, against the floor. She looks up, her mouth bloody. Mouths a single word: help.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse --

SALLY
Stop! Stop.

The women abrogate their chant, look around, almost dazed from the intensity of the ritual.

SALLY
He's killing her.

All look at Gillian. Sally's right, she looks like a car wreck. Mouth and eyes bloody. Slowly, Frances nods, bows her head in defeat.

Sally drops to her knees just outside the perimeter of the pentagram, eyes wet with tears, rocking slightly.

Gillian is curled up in a ball within the circle. Her breaths are ragged, halting. She really does seem to be dying.

(CONTINUED)

188 CONTINUED: (2) 188

SALLY
Come on, Gilly, hang on. You've got to fight.

Gillian looks up at her, broken. Lost.

GILLIAN
I can't, Sal.

Gillian's eyes flutter. She really is dying.

SALLY
Don't you die on me, Gillian Owens. We're going to die together. On the same day. You promised me, remember? Today is not that day.

But Gillian can only manage a smile of farewell.

GILLIAN
I love you, Sally.

CLOSE - SALLY

Something about Gillian's words. Suddenly she's up fast.

SALLY
That's it. Just hang on.
(shouting)
Everybody, in here, now! I need a knife. Hurry. Damn it, people, let's move.

CUT TO:

189 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 189

Sally has moved the women into a wider circle now, barking orders, something different about her, hair wild, again bristling with magic.

SALLY
Where's that knife? Now.

Linda runs in with several knives in her hand. Sally selects the largest, sharpest blade. Makes a cut across each of her palms.

SALLY
Just a small incision. Make sure your palms touch.

(CONTINUED)

189 CONTINUED: 189

Sally passes the knife to Frances, who leans over Kylie.

SALLY
Don't be scared.

KYLIE
I'm not.

Frances cuts the child's palms, then her own. As Sally speaks now a...

190 SERIES OF SHOTS/CUTS 190

of the various women's faces as they trepidatiously slice their palms.

SALLY
We've been trying to force him out. But what we need to do is make Gillian stronger. This isn't going to work by hating him. We're going to have to love her.

The knife has made it all the way around the circle back to Sally, who puts it behind her in her belt.

SALLY
Okay, everyone, hands together.
(to herself)
Swear.

The women all touch their hands together. What happens now is remarkable. A vein in Sally's hand darkens, deep blue running now up one arm and down the other, connecting with a sudden blue vein in the hand of the woman next to her. The pulsing line of life shoots around the circle, connecting all the women, whipping faster now, more and more veins joining this coven together. The sounds of MANY disparate HEARTBEATS MERGE INTO ONE.

Gillian screams. Jimmy's rage is ungodly in its ferocity. Whipping Gillian's head back and forth. Roaring.

Sally separates from the circle. Two women stare at their palms, glowing blue apertures there. They close in, joining the circle once more.

Sally walks forward and into the pentagram. Gillian lunges, swinging at Sally. Sally's hands move fast, grabbing Gillian's wrist with magical strength.

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED: 190

SALLY
My blood.

She pulls the knife from her back belt. Slashes Gillian's palm.

SALLY
Your blood.

Sally lifts her bleeding palm.

SALLY
Forever.

And Sally slaps her bloody palm against Gillian's.

191 CLOSE - THEIR TWO HANDS 191

explode with a white light that FILLS the SCREEN.

192 EXT. BEACH (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY (1690'S) 192

Maria Owens blood on the rocks begins to bead and recede. A wave hits and washes the blood away, water salty as tears.

193 MARIA 193

stands, looking out longingly at sea, holding her infant. Her tears fall, but her hand catches them before they strike her sleeping infant.

194 CLOSE - TEAR 194

turns to a diamond in her hand and blows away.

195 EXT. COMMONS (MARIA'S ISLAND) - DAY (1920'S) 195

The two Aunts as young women stand under an awning kissing their boyfriends as lightning strikes harmlessly on the ground behind them.

196 EXT. MAIN STREET (MARIA'S ISLAND) - FEW YEARS AGO 196

The bicycles whiz past and part to reveal Michael as he stands amidst the multicolored flags. He waves to Sally, his lips forming a simple, final affirmation: "I do love you."

197 INT. OWENS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT) 197

Sally and Gillian are blown apart by the white light. Gillian staggers backwards as something starts to writhe within her. It's Jimmy.

SALLY
Push him out, Gilly. Push him out.

Gillian begins shoving at her rippling flesh and then draws a spectral form from within her. Like a birth, she shoves and wrenches a spectral Jimmy from inside her, coming free now, hitting the ground and shattering into a thousand small coalescing marbles.

SALLY
Brooms. Sweep him back to the grave.

The women grab their brooms and begin sweeping Jimmy out of the circles.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

198 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION 198

The women, chanting, move down the hallway en masse, sweeping the Jimmy particles --

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you -- out!

199 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION 199

The women sweep Jimmy across the floor towards the back door.

ALL WOMEN
Fie on you, cur, I curse you, out!

AUNT FRANCES
Get the kettle! Children, come!

Nan and Marjorie grab the steaming cauldron from the stove.

200 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 200

The women sweep the Jimmy particles toward the grave.

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED: 200

His spectral form, dissembling and reforming, seems to be SCREAMING.

AUNT FRANCES
The kettle! The kettle!

Nan and Patty hasten with the cauldron --

The women sweep the particles back into the mound of earth, disappearing into the ground, a spectral hand clinging for a moment and then sucked down. Gone.

AUNT FRANCES
Pour it on the grave.

GILLIAN (O.S.)
We'll do it.

WIDER

Sally and Gillian stand grave-side, they each hold a side of the caldron and dump the hot, foul brew over Jimmy's grave.

GILLIAN
You're dead.

SALLY
For good.

With a horrifying HISS, the thicket dissolves into STEAM, and the ground into molten earth. The PTA moms let out triumphant cries.

201 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY (EARLY AUTUMN) 201

Sally stands alone in the garden, pulling a sweater close against the closing autumn chill.

The SPOONS CHIME lightly in the fall breeze. A figure is moving out of the shadows. Sally looks up, eyes alive with hope as the figure is revealed to be... a FED EX GUY.

FED EX GUY
Sally Owens?

He hands Sally an envelope.

202 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 202

Sally reads the letter aloud to Gillian and the aunts...

SALLY OWENS
'... Leads this office to conclude that James Hawkins' cause of death was accidental. Jewelry found in the ashes of the structure provided positive identification -- '

Something falls from the envelope onto the butcher-block table: Jimmy's rattlesnake ring.

Gillian picks up a meat mallet. Wham! She flattens the ring.

The others turn away. Sally picks up a star-shaped cookie from a holiday plate, turns it over in her hand.

203 EXT. GARDEN - DAY 203

Snak! The old garden shears snip a clump of yarrow.

Kylie and Antonia work in the garden, carefully harvesting herbs to dry: toad flax and parsley, comfrey, fennel and more; All of nature's wonderful pharmacy.

Kylie catches a yellow leaf that falls in midair. She and Antonia laugh in delight. The aunts watch on, happy.

Where Jimmy's grave used to be, Gillian piles up fallen leaves in a burn pile. She looks healthy and happy.

Kylie giggles, then skipping forward, trips. Gillian is there, catching her.

GILLIAN
Don't worry. I won't let you fall down.

204 EXT. DESERT (ARIZONA) - CACTUS GARDEN - MAGIC HOUR 204

The song of a thousand CRICKETS. A lone figure stands amidst row cactus, giving them water. He takes off his hat, wipes his brow. Takes a moment to listen.

SALLY (O.S.)
I don't think you're my one true love, Gary Hallet.

(CONTINUED)

204 CONTINUED: 204

Hallet turns to face a figure standing before him. Sally. So perfect he has to blink to make sure she's not a mirage.

HALLET
I'm not, huh?

SALLY
There isn't one true love out there for me. But maybe, if you put your heart into it, real love is enough. I'd like to give it a try.

Hallet smiles. Then he reaches up, touches his eyes, fighting his own tears.

SALLY
Are you crying?

HALLET
No. It's this damned contact lens. You know I was born with the weirdest thing about my eyes...

Sally watches as he removes a lens.

CLOSE - HALLET'S EYES

SALLY (O.S.)
One green and one blue.

SALLY

HOLD ON Sally as she begins to laugh, pulling a puzzled Hallet towards her, holding him close in her arms.

HOLD ON the couple's embrace. Overhead, a shooting star cuts the horizon, a burst of light, there for a moment, then gone.

AUNT FRANCES (V.O.)
And that's how your mother ended the curse of the Owens women and found true love.

205 INT. OWENS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 205

Frances finishes arranging the candied apples on a tray. Jet drops the box on the table.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED: 205

Within, bundled black hats and capes. Witch costumes.

A figure enters, plastic jack-o'-lantern in hand.

HALLET
Trick or treat. Who's ready?

The children grab their costumes and scramble for the door.

206 INT. BACK STAIRCASE - NIGHT 206

Hallet helps his black-clad daughters up the narrow stairs. He gallantly offers Aunt Frances a hand. She smiles at him regally.

Gillian, also in a witch costume, stands at the top of the steps. She opens the window and climbs out onto the roof. Beckons to Jet. Aunt Frances passes black umbrellas out the window.

Kylie and Antonia scamper out fearlessly: they have done this many times. A form appears behind Hallet. It's Sally, also in witch garb. She leans into her husband's arms and they kiss.

The girls giggle.

HALLET
Have fun.

207 EXT. OWENS HOUSE - ROOF - NIGHT 207

The Owens women perch along the roof between the Victorian turrets, like a row of dark birds. Behind the silhouette of the roof, a fat, gold, harvest moon has risen.

REVERSE ANGLE

Across the street, the townsfolk have gathered, PTA women and their families. All together for what appears to be an anticipated annual ritual.

Aunt Frances shoots her black umbrella open. Aunt Jet opens hers. Gillian holds hands with Kylie and Antonia and the children shoot their black umbrellas open. Sally pops her umbrella wide.

207 CONTINUED: 207

The women look at each other, then, with exuberant shrieks, the Owens women leap from the high roof, their wild rags flapping and their umbrellas arched over them like dark blossoms. They come down slowly, laughing.

FADE TO BLACK.

OVER, only the sound of their LAUGHTER.

THE END

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